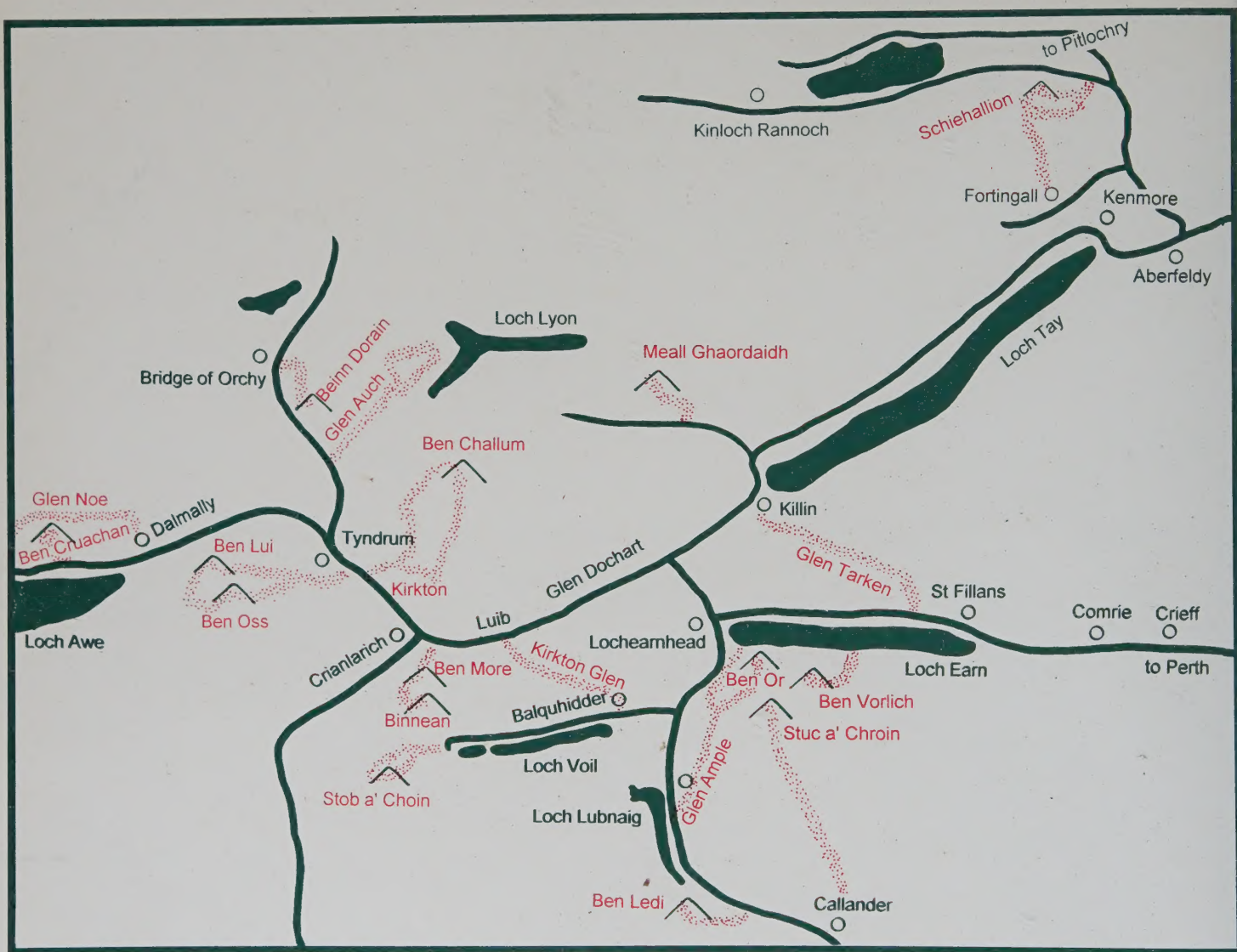


*Peaks and
Glens of
The Central
Highlands.*



A Scottish Rambles Guide

by Bob Money.



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Published by Scottish Rambles Crieff. 0764 655901.



BEN LUI AND BEN OSS.

Ben Lui.

Ben Lui: Mount of the calf. **Ben Oss:** Mount of the deer. **Creag Dubh a' Bhealaich.** Pass of the black crag. **Allt an Rund:** Bending stream. **Cononish:** Relates to St Conon.

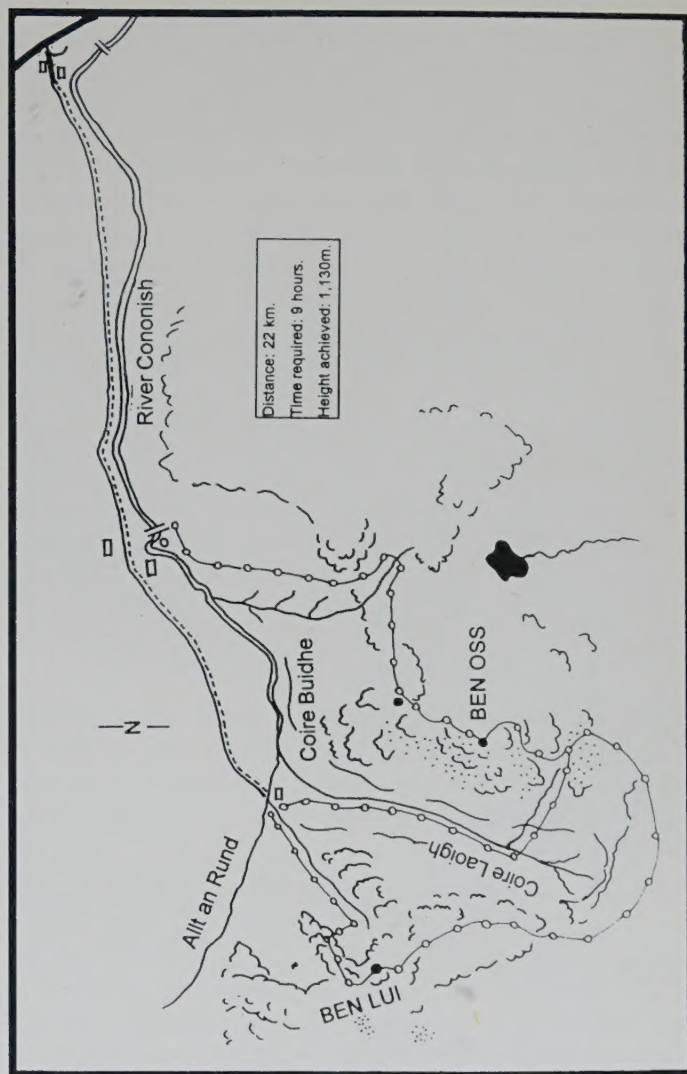
Corrie Buidhe: Yellow corrie. **Eas Anie:** Delightful waterfall. **Tyndrum:** House on the ridge. **Beinn Chuirn:** Mountain of the cairn. **Corrie Gaothack:** Windy corrie.

The 6.5km trek into Glen Cononish gives you a choice of climbing two remarkable mountains, Ben Lui or Ben Oss, or indeed climbing them both to make one unforgettable excursion. If you choose the latter then be prepared for some rough trekking over the last stages of the walk.

1.5km south of Tyndrum you will find the signpost for Dalrigh that takes you onto a small sliproad. Once on this road you take the left fork where you will find a good car park. When you leave the car park go right and follow the road down past what I believe was the old school for the area, as the plaque on the wall, dated 1829, proclaims the pursuit of excellence. Five hundred years before this little school was ever founded, a very serious incident took place here amidst these pleasant green fields that could have changed the whole course of Scottish history, and the name Dalrigh, Royal field, commemorates that incident.



During the summer of 1306, Robert the Bruce, attended by about three hundred men was heading north to gain refuge in the vastness of Kintyre after his disastrous defeat at Methven near Perth, when his column was attacked here at Dalrigh by



one thousand men led by his implacable enemy Alexander McDougall, Lord of Lorn. Overpowered by force of numbers, Bruce had to make a fighting retreat down Strathfillan towards the south, and at Loch Dochart where the remnants of his men were hemmed in between the loch and the craggy north slope, Three Lorn men, one called McKeoch sprang on Bruce in an attempt to dismount him, But Bruce managed to drag himself clear of the wild Lorn men after killing or wounding them, but McKeoch was left clinging to Bruce's mantle and the brooch that held it secure. It was finally on the Braes O' Balquhidder that Bruce, and what remained of his followers managed to get clear of their assailants. As for the brooch so dearly won by McKeoch, it is today believed still to be in the possession of the McDougall family.

Directly after the school, the trail goes onto a good hardpack road that will take you unhindered for over 6km to the base of Ben Lui. A short way down the trail the road forks and you take the right branch which passes over a wooden bridge, then a steady plod on a gentle incline takes you under the railway bridge and the whole glen now opens up to you.

It will take you just under an hour of pleasant walking before you reach Cononish Farm, and although this is quite a secluded glen, it is very much alive. Just above the farm you can see the scar of quarry workings, and there really is gold in them thar hills.

Just below the farm you will see a foot bridge crossing the river, and if you intend to follow the whole route, this is where you will exit from the hills. Just beyond the farm, the whole beauty of that magnificent rugged peak Ben Lui is dead ahead with its dangerous looking twin ridges, and to your left the great bulk of Coire Buidhe runs onto Ben Oss. Just 2km from here the trail ends at the foot of Ben Lui, and if this is as far as you intend to proceed, you can explore the whole area around this dramatic setting at your leisure.

At this juncture, two rivers run into the River Cononish, Allt an Rund from the west and Allt Coire Laoigh from the south, and the meeting of these rivers has been long regarded as the

birthplace of the mighty River Tay. To start your ascent of Ben Lui you must first cross Allt an Rund to where you will see a substantial sheep pen. From the sheep pen start heading on the right bank of the river that runs out of the great Ben Lui corry, this is where your work really starts.

From the sheep pen, the slope looks quite formidable, but in fact it's almost like climbing a staircase with well placed steps all the way up the side of the lively tumbling river, and quicker than expected you will be clearing the last breast into the great corry, Corrie Gaohack. I find this massive amphitheatre quite remarkable, on three sides, the great dark faces rise steeply up to the summit, jagged and menacing.

There is more than one way up to the final peak, but from the great corry I suggest that you break right and start heading up onto the right hand ridge, which is the more popular route. This ridge is fairly broad but, it does lead onto a narrower ridge as you progress, and this ridge runs close to a mighty drop with nothing but fresh air between you and the bottom of the corry.





The ridge leading up to Ben Lui peak..

Normally, this poses no problems, but in windy conditions it might be expedient to look towards the other safer ridge that runs in from the north. From the right hand ridge, it is only a relatively short way over the moor to the northern ridge,

where you will find that this great rock strewn spine leads fairly comfortably up to the final peak.

Once on the peak, again you have a choice, call it a day, and enjoy your conquest, or head down the southern ridge for



Ben Oss from Coire Gaothack.

Ben Oss which you can see beyond Corrie Laoigh. If you decide to take in Ben Oss you will find the route down the southern flank simple enough, just keep to the edge of the

ridge where you will find good walking conditions. As you near the bottom of the ridge you will be able to see a path that crosses over the moorland above Coire Laoigh and you can start heading down towards this, but what you must be careful not to do is follow the path that heads towards

Glen Falloch, your route splits left, away from it, towards the lower slope of Ben Oss. As you cross the small stretch of moorland you will have a good view of the stony head of Ben Oss so that you will have no trouble in taking the correct route, and as you start heading upwards onto the shoulder you will find good stretches of path that will lead you up to the source of the river at the base of the stony peak. From here, it is an easy ascent up the stony scree slope to the cairn at the summit.

From the cairn, now head north along the rim of the mountain and as you go you get a fine view of Ben Lui across the valley floor. After some comfortable walking you will find another small peak ahead of you with a cairn at the summit, once past this you will start dropping quite quickly into a depression with some peaty tarns at its centre. From here you will be able to see Cononish Farm and the river below you, so you must now start to head down the substantial slope. It is rough moorland where you must find your own direction, but it is probably better to stay to the left of the river that runs out of the depression, and when you reach the bottom, then cross the river to the right bank.

Between the contributory and the bridge over the river Cononish there is a broad stretch of fairly marshy ground to cross, but it is no worse than any other low lying moorland, and with a little care you may not even get your feet wet. As you approach the large mound with a stone wall around it, you should go to the right of the mound where you will now see the bridge that takes you over the river back to the original road, and your last lap back to the car park.

BEN OSS.

If your destination is solely Ben Oss, you must again start at the sheep pen at the base of Ben Lui. From here, head towards Allt Coire Laoigh over the green swathe of parkland towards a small ridge that runs parallel to the river where you will find higher dry ground. As you follow the river south into the long green valley towards Coire Laoigh, you will find a reasonably firm footpath, and on your left, the desolate

rock faces and scree laden slopes of Ben Oss may look formidable, but this place has its own awesome beauty, hemmed in as you are by two 1000m high mountains.

The valley is two kilometres long and you should follow it until you see a break in the ridge where Ben Oss meets with Creag Dhubh a' Bhealaich and here you will find a small river running down the slope from this break. Follow the river upwards and this in time will bring you to a spot where you can now ascend the scree laden slope to the summit of the ben. If you wish to carry on around the rim, then follow the directions from the previous chapter, or reverse the walk and head over to Ben Lui.

Lochearnhead Hotel and Lochside Cottages

Looking out over the broad expanse of Loch Earn towards Ben Vorlich and Ben Ouhr The **Lochearnhead Hotel** must have one of the finest views in Scotland. Beautifully positioned for easy reach of many interesting hill walks the hotel offers good accommodation, a highly regarded Table d'Hôte, comfortable bar lounge and a wealth of hospitality. The beautifully positioned chalets within the grounds make an excellent self catering base for those who like to go as they please. Special 3 and 5 day breaks available. *Phone Angus Cameron for further information.*

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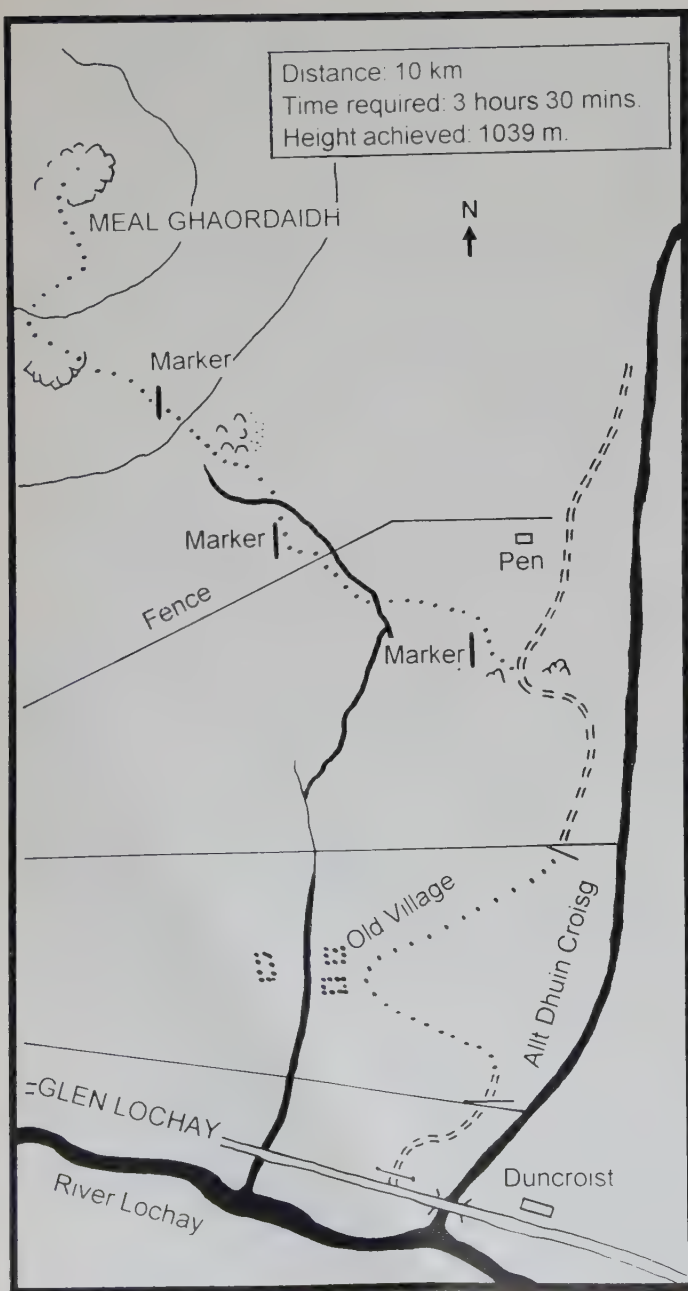
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MEALL GHAORDAIDH.

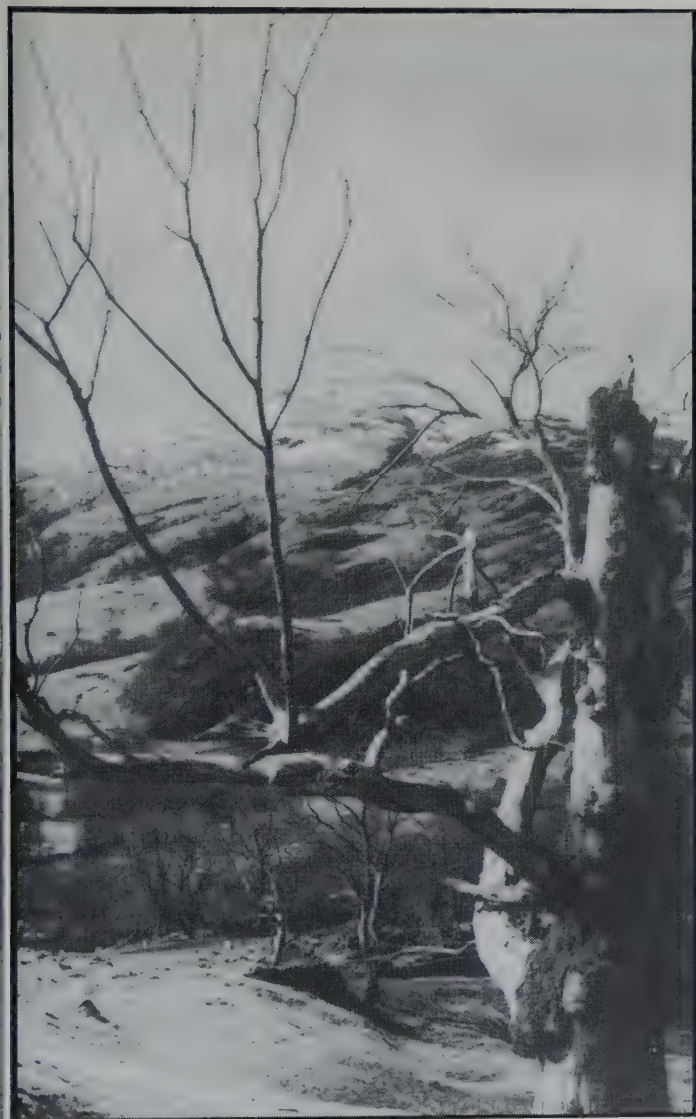
Meal Ghaordaidh: No translation can be found.
Glen Lochay: Glen of the loch. **Duncroisk:** Hill fort of the crossing.

Glen Lochay, although not nearly so popular as its near neighbour Glen Lyon, offers the ramblar, and the climber, much more of a selection of interesting and varied outings. To become acquainted with this long lush glen tucked away behind Killin, it is worth testing your metal on Meall Ghaordaidh, where you will find unsurpassed views of all the neighbouring peaks and gain a familiarity with a beautiful glen that has for too long been overlooked by the serious ramblar.

Leaving Killin on the A827, the north Loch Tay road, you must turn sharp left when you pass over the River Lochay. The bridge is just beyond The Bridge of Lochay hotel. This will bring you onto a narrow road, and 5km along this road you will cross a small bridge beside Duncroisk. Because of the narrowness of the road you must pick your parking spot carefully so as not to impede the farm traffic.

Immediately beyond the small bridge you will find a metal gate leading into a field beside the river. Pass through the gate and follow the track which leads to a high gate in a deer fence, pass through the gate, closing it behind you, and this brings you onto a long stretch of pleasant parkland. Wandering up over the parkland you will soon see the remains of a large village to your left. The remains of the village straddle both sides of a small stream and represent one of the best examples that can be found of an old Highland clachan. Looking up over the clachan you will now be able to see the peak on the top of Meall Ghaordaidh.

From the village head over the field to your right and pass through another gate in the deer fence, this will bring you to another trail. Follow the broad trail that wanders up beside the river and in time this will bring you to a spot where the trail is flanked by large stones. Looking straight ahead you will be able to see a substantial dry stane pen on a ridge with



Creag Mhor above Glen Lochay.

the backdrop of Beinn nan Oighreag. On the ground at this spot, a large number of timber sleepers have been laid, so you should have no trouble in recognising it. Here you must

now leave the stony trail and veer to your left where you will see another sketchy trail with a marker stob beside it. This new trail leads you up onto the first of many miles of energy sapping coarse moorland. As you forge upwards, don't slavishly try and follow the trail as it is generally more useful as a water channel than a useable path, but make your own way up where you find it most comfortable. After a short way you will be able to see a low wire fence above you and, behind it, you should see a tall metal marker. This is what you must head for.

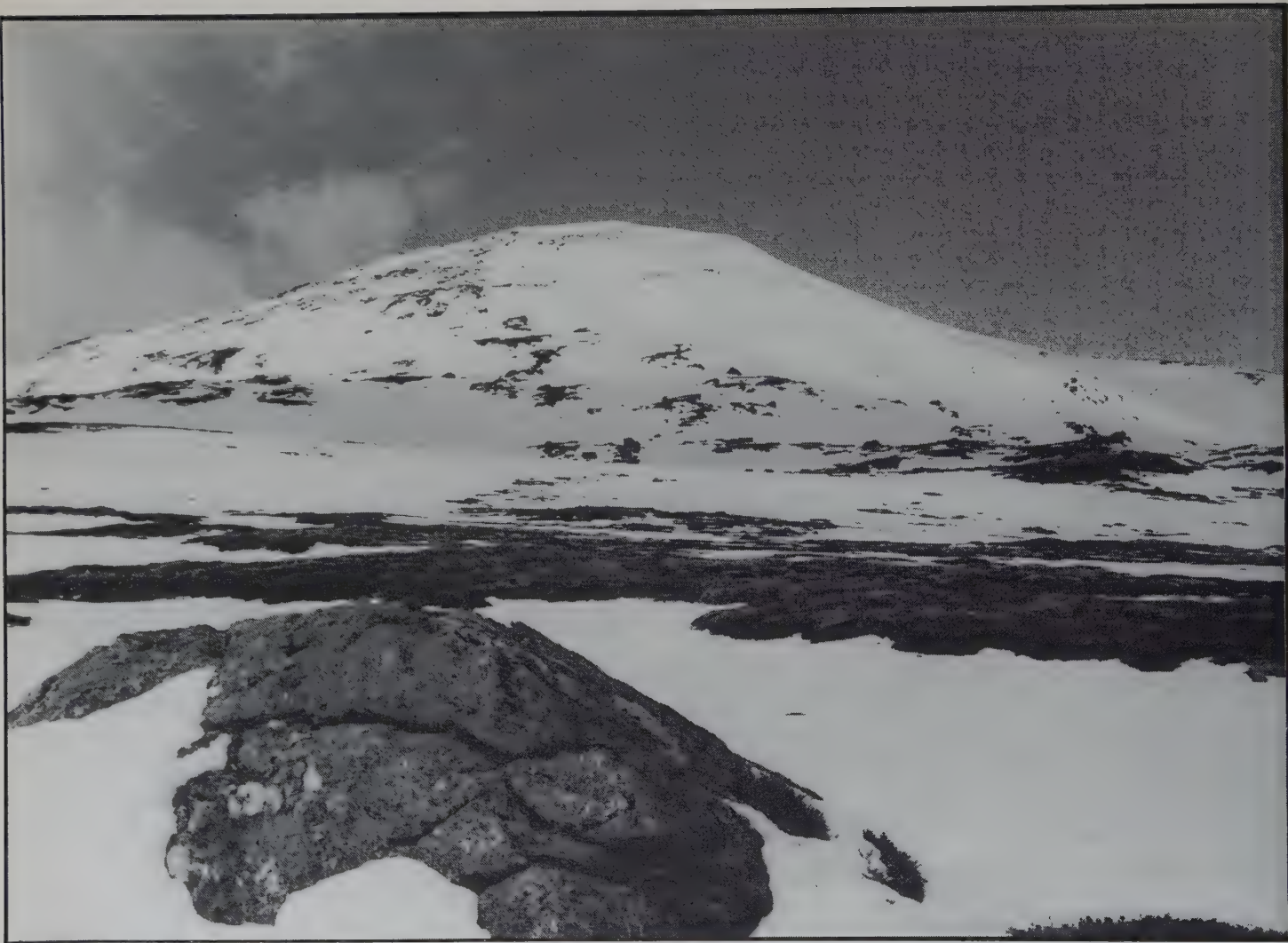
Beyond the fence you are now on the great broad shoulder of Meall Ghaordaidh and looking upwards you should see, a little to your right, a scattering of great boulders towards which you should now set your course. Once up among these boulders you will now see a long ridge above you and the slender stem of another marker.

Still pushing upwards, you will breast the ridge and reach the metal marker where you will get the first good view of the stony peak, it's quite impressive and holds its own with the hundreds of other high peaks that can be seen all around you. From this marker you will now be able to look out over the last remaining stretch of moorland and choose the route that you may want to take up to the summit.

As you look towards the base of the peak, you will see to the left, a rocky ridge, and this is probably the best route. Cross over the last of the moor until you reach this small rocky outcrop and you will find that from here it is a straightforward ascent upwards towards the peak.

When I came up here during the middle of April, snowy winter conditions still prevailed, and I was delighted to find a trio of inquisitive capercaillie sunning themselves on a little island of rock, sheltered from the biting wind. How common capercaillie are on these peaks I have no idea, but they were quite prepared to allow me to climb out of the snow and share their little island for a brief respite. That in itself made the whole climb worthwhile.

On reaching the stony summit of the peak, you will find the



Peak of Meall Ghaordaidh

O.S. pillar surrounded by a hollow cairn, and if it's particularly windy, you can eat your sandwiches within the

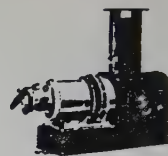
low wall of the cairn in relative comfort and enjoy the spectacular views from here.



On the shoulder of Meall Ghaordaidh.



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3 star commended**

THE LUIB HOTEL

Glendochart, Crianlarich, Perthshire. FK20 8QT

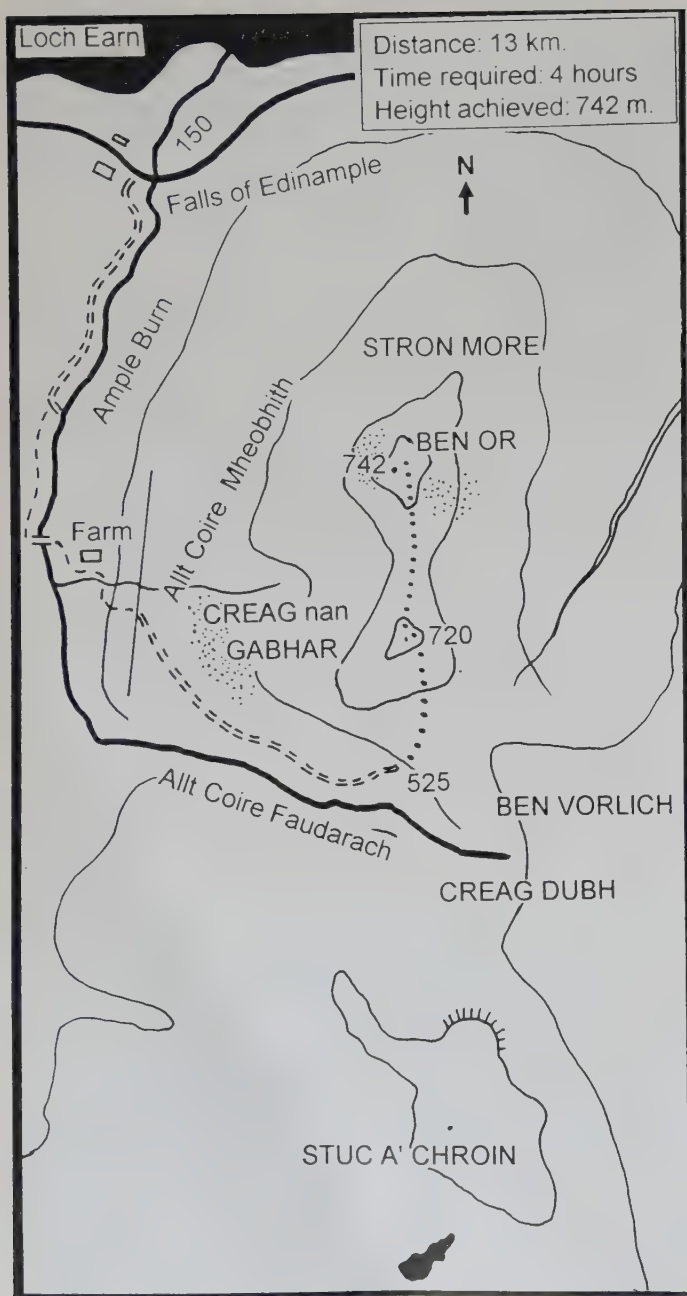
Situated at the centre of historic Glen Dochart, **THE LUIB**, once a 16th century Drovers Inn, still offers a warm and friendly welcome to travellers throughout the year.

The comfortable Hotel is fully licensed with a lounge bar and restaurant, and breakfast, morning coffee, bar lunches, afternoon tea and evening meals are available to non-residents. The modern comfortable bedrooms all have private facilities and the Hotel is centrally heated throughout.

So whether it's for a bar lunch in our comfortable lounge, or a relaxed evening meal in our restaurant, you will always find a welcome at this family run Hotel.

Phone: 0567 820 664 for further information.





BEN OR

Ben Or: Golden hill. **Stron More:** Big nose. **Creag nan Gabhar:** Goat crag. **Allt Coire Mheobhith:** River of the middle corry. **Allt Coire Faudarach:** River of the turbulent corry. **Edinample:** Local folklore advises that this is Pictish for Edin's place of turning.

Rising some 600m above Loch Earn, Ben Or, confronted by its high more brutal neighbours Ben Vorlich and Stuc a' Chroin, has been a friendly landmark for travellers over countless centuries as its bulk can be seen from Glen Ogilvie, the Balquhidder Braes, and the entire length of Loch Earn. Although in ready sight of McGregor country, on these slopes they were never welcome.

At the base of the ben and close to the lochside sits Ardvorlich House, the ancient home of the Stewarts of Ardvorlich and witness to many bloody events. It was here in 1645 that Montrose chose to gather the clans around him to set the country in bloody revolt against the government and within sight of the ben, the spot where the famous mercenary Dugald Dalgetty, fresh from his wars on the continent, offered his services to Montrose and the cause of King Charles. The same Dalgetty was later Knighted by Montrose after the battle of Inverlochy, near modern Fort William, where the Duke of Argyll and his army were routed by more than a handful of men who had emerged from the hills after a torturous forced march from what is now Fort Augustus.

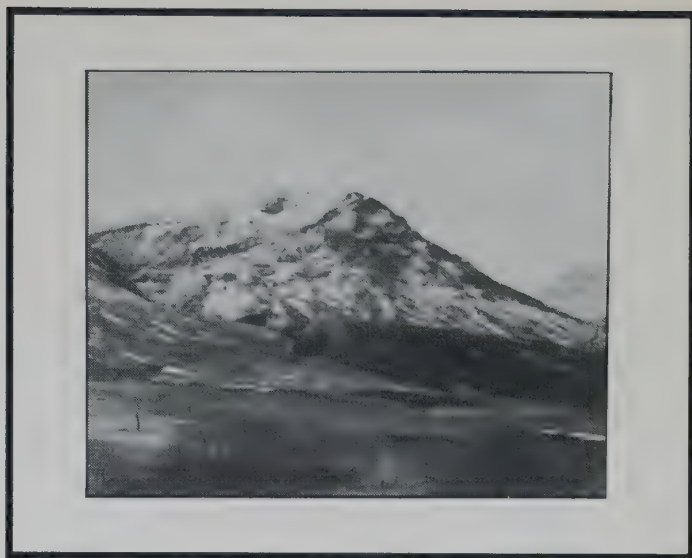
Between the McGregors and the Stewarts there is a catalogue of atrocities. In 1589 a marauding band of McGregors captured John Drummond, the husband of Major Stewart's sister and, after severing his head, they presented it to his wife, then at Ardvorlich. The poor woman who was pregnant at the time, subsequently went mad. In retaliation, Major Stewart captured twelve McGregors and had them hanged at a spot near St. Fillans. Their remains were discovered last century in a pit where they had been unceremoniously dumped. The son of the late John Drummond was notorious

during his lifetime for the vindictive pursuance of McGregors, so much so that in 1660 the McGregors set out over the braes to desecrate his corpse while it was being transported to the family burial vault. Fortunately the burial party were warned in advance and buried the body by the roadside until the McGregors had left. Today a stone can be seen at the temporary burial ground a mile or so east of Ardvorlich House. As you will now be aware, the McGregors were not welcome on these braes around Ben Or.

In all fairness, the Stewarts were even handed in their rough treatment of unruly neighbours. Not far from the little bridge near Ardvorlich House can be found a stone with the inscription. "Near this spot were interred the bodies of 7 McDonalds of Glen Coe, killed when attempting to harry Ardvorlich. Anno Domini 1620."

The starting point for the walk is 1.5km east of the A84. As you make your way along the secondary south Loch Earn road you will notice the white painted castle to your left near the lochside. This is the castle of Edinample, once the home of the Marquis of Breadalbane. Not far beyond the castle you will find a little lay-by on your right beside a few houses. On the left is a small church like building, and just before the small stone bridge crossing the River Ample you turn into the lay-by where you will find space for car parking. This is not an official car park, so show a little thought for the people who live and work around here.

From here a hardpack road runs up into Glen Ample, past the falls of Edinample, which tumbles down to your left through a series of little pots. Beyond the falls the road swings hard left towards a gate. The track leading straight ahead through the deer fence would lead you up onto the shoulder of Meall nan Oighreag, the hill of wild cloudberries. Having taken the left fork you can now enjoy a pleasant relaxed ramble with the road running close to the river and the high bulk of Ben Or dominating the skyline to your left. Less than 2km from the starting point the hardpack crosses the river by a concrete bridge. This is a private access to the farm, and at this point you leave the road and go onto a footpath that leads along a



Creagan nan Gabhar.

grassy verge between the river and a high deer fence on your right. It's a pleasant and quiet spot and in time leads to a small wooden bridge where you can now cross the river.

For a short way you can walk parallel to the deer fence on your left with the large farm building and farmhouse on the opposite side of the fence. The trail now swings right and you cross the small burn ahead of you where you will see a single marker stob with arrows. If you were to carry on straight ahead, you would be on the right-of-way that crosses over to Loch Lubnaig. Instead, you follow the red arrow and swing hard left up the little embankment, and within 30m you will find yourself on the hardpack road that leads out of the farm. Cross straight over the road and, within 50m you will meet with yet another road, follow this road away from the farm and after a good stiff upward plod through this break in the young tree plantation you will encounter a gate in the high deer fence with a stile beside it where you may now cross over. Follow the rutted road upwards and you are now on your way to the summit of Ben Or.



Ben Vorlich & Stuc a' Chroin from Ben Or cairn.

Although not particularly arduous it is a steady climb up the old road, but as you rise the views begin to open up around you and Glen Ample can now be seen stretching out far below you. On the left of the track the slopes of Creagan nan Gabhar and Corrie Mheobhith slope up to the Ben Or summit, while

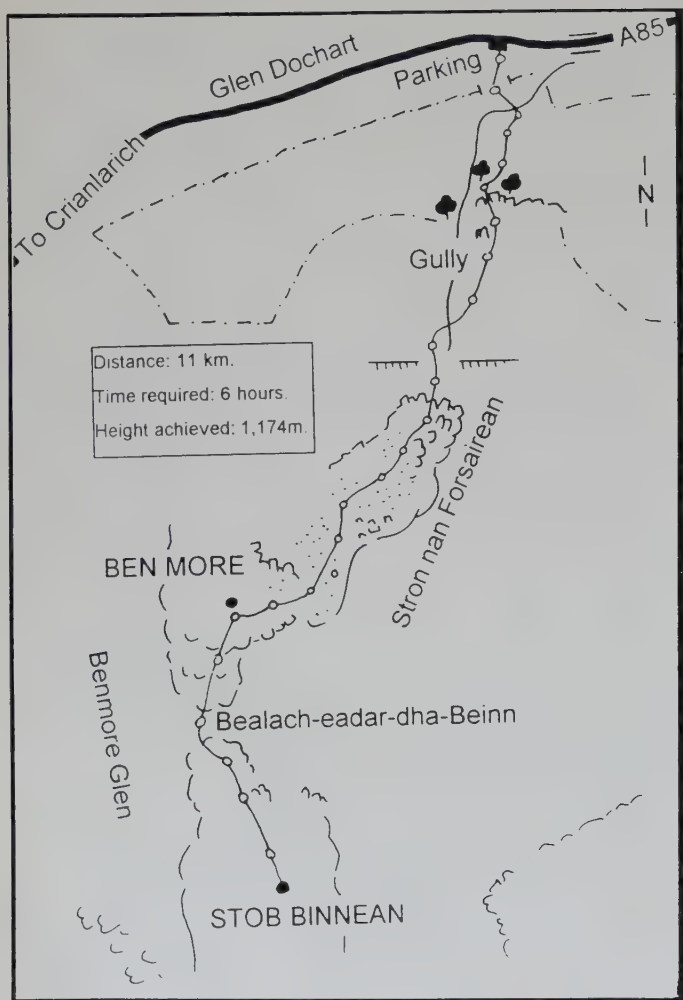
to the right, the steep slopes of Coire Fuadarach lead precipitously up to the dark crags of Creag Dhubh, and if you look down into the river gorge amidst the wild scattering of grey stones on the opposite bank you will pick out the remains of old sheillings.

As you near the end of the hardpack trail, the impressive

pinnacle of Ben Vorlich rises into view ahead of you, high and menacing with its black sheer crags oft wreathed in the white folds of mist, then, without warning, the road dumps you at 550m on the coarse moorland slope of Ben Or under the brooding gaze of the mightier neighbours Creag Dhubh, Ben Vorlich and Stuc a' Chroin, both joined by a long black ridge and dangerous face. In comparison, the slopes of gentle Ben Or look positively inviting.

Turn your back on the high finger of Stuc a' Chroin, Ben Vorlich will now be to your right, and walk straight onto the coarse golden moorland heading upwards towards the long ridge ahead of you. The sloping moorland is a bit featureless, but providing that you are going up, and tend to favour your right slightly you will in time breast the ridge and find yourself near a stony plateau. You can now orientate yourself and cross over to the prominent cairn that marks the top of the first summit.

From the first peak, looking north towards Loch Earn you will see the main peak less than 1km ahead of you and various well used tracks leading over the flat moor and up the other side and the cairn at the top and, with all the views around you, it will have been well worthwhile. Only one problem of course, you have got to walk back down again, the same way as you came up.



BEN MORE AND STOB BINNEIN FROM GLEN DOCHART.

Ben More: The large mountain. **Stron na Forsairean:** Nose shaped hill of the deer forester. **Allt Corrie Chaorach:** Stream of the sheep corry. **Stob Binnein:** Pinnacle of the conical. **Glen Dochart:** Glen of sorrow.

When venturing up onto Ben More, keep one thing in mind: this mountain is 16 square kilometres of wild, steep and trackless land whose ever changing moods can quickly terrify the unwary. Long after the snow has melted on its neighbours, Ben More and its companion Stob Binnean, still gleaming white in the early spring sun can seem like an inviting prospect, but unless you are well prepared, then go elsewhere.

When setting out on the trip, try and choose a period of settled weather, and like many hundreds of people before you, you will thoroughly enjoy the experience that is Ben More. Enjoy it, appreciate the freedom of wandering over its wild slopes, but above all, respect it.

Three kilometres west of Glen Dochart Caravan Park, you will find a little lay-by on your left where you can park. It is about 500 metres beyond the small bridge that spans Allt Coire Chaorach. There are on-going road improvements on this stretch of the A85, but so far this little lay-by, which is the start of the walk, appears to be secure from development.

From the car park walk up the bank away from the road and you can follow a small trail over to a gate at the edge of the forest. The key to an enjoyable day on the mountain is getting through the forest quickly and cleanly. Too many people suffer the indignity of crashing through the trees and getting thoroughly lost, so follow the initial instructions closely and you will not suffer that indignity.

Once over the gate you will find yourself on a good path and soon you will have a wooden marker stob and a turning on your left, if you look right, you will see the remains of an old shed, IGNORE IT, this is not your turn off, but the route



The lower slopes of Ben More.

e left does lead to an attractive view of the lower slopes of
e ben over a small lochan. So, having ignored that fork,
u must now take the next fork to your left. This fork leads
a small burn, and you must cross straight over the burn

here you will find a green mossy path to your left. It can be a
bit wet at times, but it now leads you to a fire break in the
trees where you again turn left, but only for a few metres.
What you now have is the meeting of two fire breaks and one



Stob Binnean beyond Stron na Forsairean.

marker stob on your left and one on your right. The marker stob on your right is the one that you should now follow. It leads upwards past a fallen pine tree and ahead of you, you will pass again more marker stobs. What you must now be watching out for, is the marker that leads you off to your right, and this new trail will lead you to a final marker stob beside a broad fire break, which is directly across your path.

Walk straight across the fire break and you will see a narrow corridor running into the trees, this is the final lap through

the forest. Initially the small corridor is a bit wet, but as you proceed into the cut you will be climbing upwards over exposed tree roots that give good footholds. After a short time of steady climbing, you will notice through the trees that there is a rock face ahead of you when you see this, slope right across the face and this will bring you into a narrow belt of indigenous woods at the base of the rock face. Choose a suitable spot and start making your way up the face onto the terraces above and very quickly you will be able to look out over the claustrophobic forest into the long stretch of Glen Dochart. Note carefully your position in relation to where you started your climb, this will enable you to return later to the exact spot when you are leaving the mountain.

Above you will now be terraces of coarse moorland and

steady climb. As you make your way up you will notice two very large boulders off to your right, and this is a good landmark to head for. From here you will see that there is a very deep gully even further over to your right, and your aim should now be to start climbing up onto the moorland while keeping that gully to your right. You will find that the natural contour of the land eventually pushes you closer to the gully, and that is where you want to be.

As you climb even higher, the gully begins to broaden and diminish, until it vanishes into a broad damp plain with yes

another small burn running into it and you will get your first views of the dumpy knoll of Stron na Forsairean, which is your next target.

At the head of the gully, cross over the plain and climb the opposite bank, and from here you will be able to see the bleached bones of an old deer fence, and beyond it, the rocky face of the ston. Follow the fence upwards and over the moor until you meet the base of the rocks and you will get some remarkable views far over the bleak landscape of Coire Chaorach to Stob Binnean.

You will find a narrow path leading up to the top of Stron na Forsairean and onto a long ridge which you follow upwards. Walking is now much easier up on the stony ridge and you will be able to see the final summit of Ben More, still quite a little distance ahead of you. At the end of the ridge you will find a path leading through the broken scree and up onto the final shoulder of the ben. From here, it's a straightforward climb up the none to steep slope, to the large cairn at the top of the peak and, just beyond the cairn, you will find the O.S. pillar that marks the final height.



Stob Binnean from the top of Ben More

Beyond the summit, Stob Binnean sits waiting. The views from the top are no better than those from Ben More, nor the air any sweeter, but if you have the energy it's an interesting exercise. Just beyond the O. S. pillar you will drop down a small rock face and follow the sketchy stony path. It's a fairly steep descent and probably further than you realise, but this will bring you down into a green depression between the two mountains. Cross over the depression and you will have no trouble finding the path that leads up the stony ridge of Stob Binnean.

Once on the path, it's slog upwards time. The upwards grind is relieved when you meet with a sizeable outcrop of rock close to the path as the small cairn that marks the summit is now only a short way ahead. From the summit, you can see the long ridge that leads over to Loch Voil and Inverlochlarig in Balquhiddar Glen. Enjoy the rare view over the glen while you can, because getting back down from Stob Binnean to the small green depression may be absolutely no trouble but, the long slog back up onto Ben More is. Well I did warn you! but never mind, from here it is now all down hill.



It is an easy enough journey to carry along the ridge from Stob Binnean and descend to the car park at Inverlochlarig, but you would require transport at the other side as it is seven miles from Inverlochlarig back to the main road at Kingshouse Hotel.

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Tulipan Crescent, Callander,
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Phone (0877) 330572

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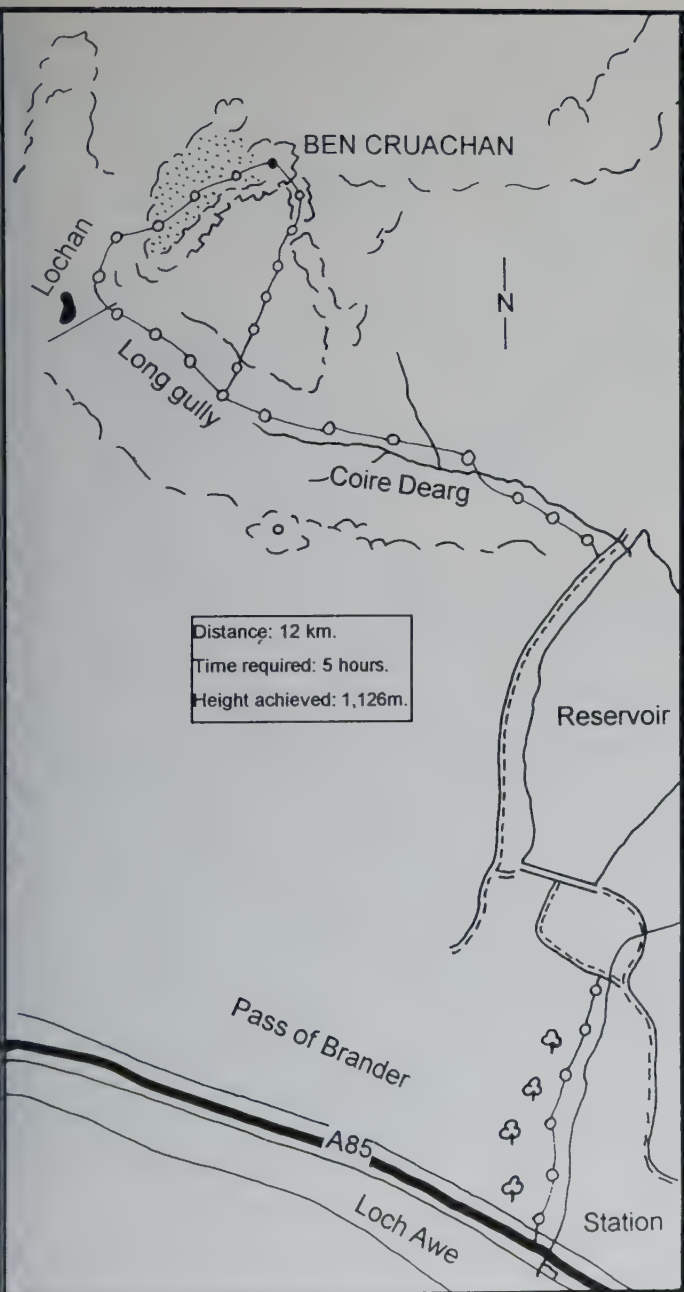
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*For further information contact Crawford and Sue Low,
quote reference 'SR'*



Ben Cruachan from Glen-Lonan



BEN CRUACHAN.

Ben Cruachan: The hip shaped mountain. **Beinn a' Bhuiridh:** Mount of the bellowing or roaring, as with deer. **Meall Cuanail:** Hill of the company, as in herd. **Coire Dearg:** Red corry. **Coire a' Bhacaill:** Corry of the crozier or hook. **Drochaid Glass:** Grey ridge.

I am never quite sure what to expect from Ben Cruachan. On a fine day its high distinctive twin horns can be seen from miles around, high, clear and beckoning but, I have enjoyed a mild winters day tramping these slopes with the weak sun glinting on the pristine snow, then, within an alarming short space of time, have had to face a demented blizzard and total white out conditions. But even in summer this mountain can be fickle, many a walker has watched in awe as the mountain, even on soft spring days, has sucked in the low mist to engulf the stony peaks before the darkening clouds rush in from the west to wash the mountain with torrential rain. But, when the sun does shine on Ben Cruachan, It's glorious.

The access to Ben Cruachan is almost directly opposite the Cruachan Visitor Centre on Loch Awe and beside the railway station. Close to the station, you will find a grassy verge by the main road where it is safe to leave your car. Walk back along the road, using the pavement, past the railway station and you will see a cut with a number of Portacabin offices directly opposite the entrance to the Visitor Centre car park. When you enter into the cut you will find that it leads up to an iron gate beside the railway line. Cross straight over the railway line to another gate and this leads you directly on to a good strong footpath that winds upwards close to the river on your right.

It's a pleasant walk up through the old wood and as you quickly gain height you get impressive views far out over Loch Awe and the rarely visited lands around Kilchrenan. Here and there you may lose the footpath, but that is no problem as you are always following the river upwards and in time when you breast the ridge you will find that the path

leads onto a good hardpack road that in turn leads you up to the massive dam at Cruachan reservoir. From the base of the dam a small path leads you up the slope where you will find a metal ladder that takes you onto the parapet of the dam itself. This is a good place to take a breather and enjoy the views around you.

Looking north up the length of the reservoir, which is about a kilometre long, you can see the dark hollow of Corrie Cruachan that leads towards the ragged peaks of Drochaid Glass and Stob Daimh, while to your right the more gentle slopes of Beinn a' Bhuiridh drop right to the water. When you leave the parapet you now pick up another hardpack road



Ben Cruachan as seen from Dalmally



The stony ridge and peak of Ben Cruachan.

that leads you up the full length of the reservoir. As you approach the end of the road you must now prepare to break left onto the coarse moorland. This will take you over a small stretch of moor to the river that runs out of Corrie Dearg. As you walk up the side of the river you will find a spot with a large slab at the centre of the river, and on the other side, the

start of a good footpath which will lead you up the length of Corrie Dearg. This is a pleasant section of the walk that should be enjoyed, as the path wanders up close to the tumbling river and you can now get views of the long jagged ridge ahead of you that leads up to the summit of the ben.

These jagged peaks of Ben Cruachan and its neighbours dominate the landscape, running west to east in a five kilometre long barrier of confused peaks, ridges and gullies between Corrie Dearg and Glen Noe. Through the centre of the pass, the tumbling burn dances and sparkles over polished rocks and into delightful little waterfalls which splash into cold pools. If you have no intention of going all the way to the top you would find this a delightful place in which to tarry.

As you near the top of the pass you will find that you have a reasonably stiff climb upwards to the ridge of the long gully. While at the base of the long gully, if you look far up to your right you can make out the north south ridge that runs off of the main peak and this is the way that you will exit from the ben. The long gully goes up in two stages and when you breast the top of the second stage you should be close into a rocky cliff face. Just beyond the breast you will see an old fence and a small lochan.

The summit path is close into this Cliff face and the first small stage is now beginning to suffer badly from erosion, for that reason, many climbers now detour round the base of the lower peak and begin the ascent from the north end of the peak, if you do this you will find it just as easy and it may help save some heavy wear and tear on the old brute.

What ever way you go, you will head upwards until you are on the edge of the ridge, don't expect any footpaths, the twin peaks of Ben Cruachan are totally covered in a heavyweight ankle breaking scree that's more reminiscent of a well blasted quarry, but the scree is stable and will cause you no problems.

Like the long gully, the mountain peak is more or less in two sections and you know when you reach the second section as the scree is much larger than it is over the first. You must now climb over the stone as opposed to merely walking through it. If you pause at the start of the second and final stage of your climb you get the most marvellous views far out to the west over the sea approaches to Oban and Mull.

Over the last section you must now pick your way carefully over the fractured rock and you will be able to see Cruachan's second peak far off to your left, but just keep going straight up and in no time at all you will be entering onto the final small summit.

The peak itself is indeed very small with only room for a few people, but what magnificent views. For a first visit to Ben Cruachan this is the best route, but looking around you, you can see the many possibilities for extended tours. The long ridge to the north peak is now open to you, as is the southern ridge that heads towards Drochad Ghlass, and far below, beautiful Glen Noe stretches from Dalmally to Loch Etive.

When you are ready to leave, walk straight through the little depression of the summit and onto the southern ridge, you will have to clamber down and over some very large rocks before you make it onto the small path, but this leads you along the edge of the ridge which falls far down to your left into Glen Noe. If you had a mind to you could follow this ridge all the way to a spot above Corrie Cruachan and then descend into the valley beside the reservoir, but for the meantime only go as far as where you see a break in the ridge wall and looking to your right you will pick out a small path heading down towards Corrie Dearg.

The path only goes a short way, and then you are on your own to make it to the bottom, but it's not difficult and, believe me, it's much easier than clambering down through the rock strewn ridge. Once at the bottom you will now be back on your original path along side the river and the long walk back to your car.

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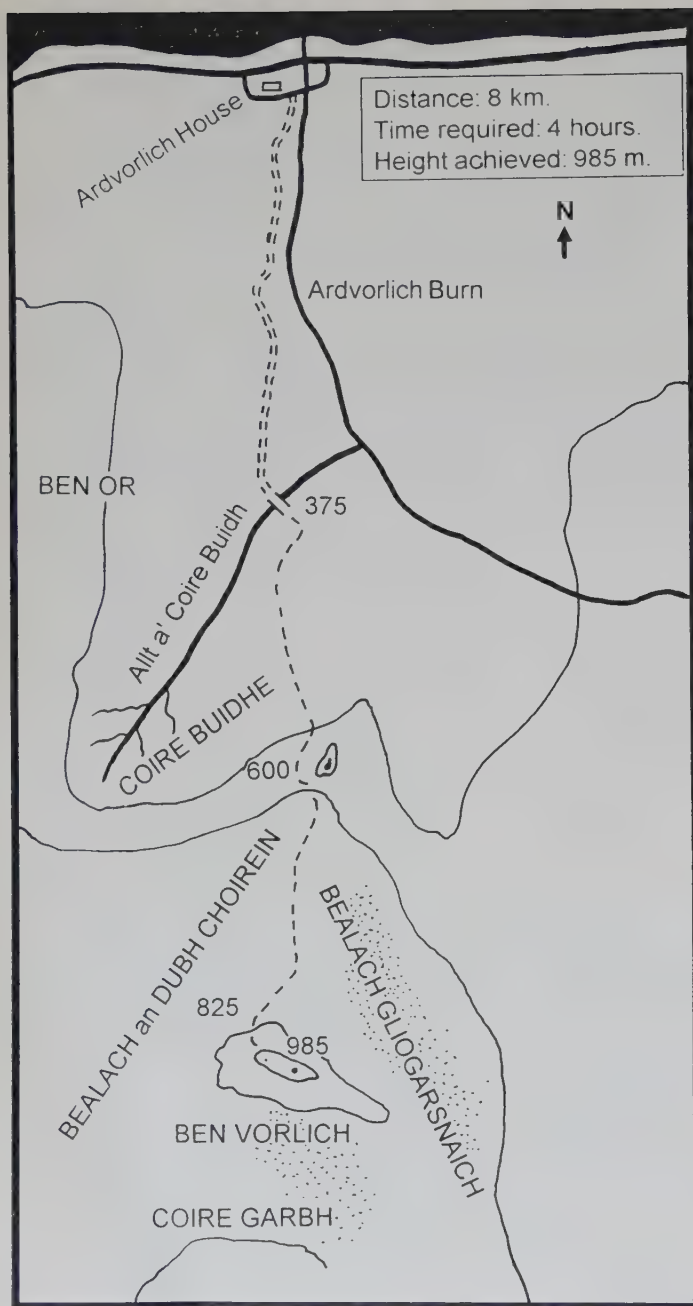
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BEN VORLICH.

Vorlich: A sea purse, this relates to the shape of the little bay on Loch Earn opposite Ardvorlich House. An **Dunard** Little hill. **Lochan na Mna:** Loch of the woman. Believed to be a reference to Mrs. Drummond who was found wandering up here after the murder of her husband. **Coire Buidhe:** Yellow corry. **Bealach an Dubh Choirein:** Pass of the dark hollow. **Coire Garbh:** Rough corry. **Bealach Gliogarsnaich:** The tinkling pass, like the sound of small stones falling.

For anyone who has walked the quiet slopes of Ben Or, it must seem very tempting to cross that long ridge leading over the stony sides of Bealach Dubh Choirein, and then up to the peak of Ben Vorlich. From Ben Or, Ben Vorlich at times may look a high menacing crag with its steep rock scattered slopes and black ridges, and indeed it can be a dark and menacing place for the unwary, but taken from the right place it can also be a stimulating and enjoyable days outing.

You should begin your walk to Ben Vorlich on the south side of Loch Earn, at the east gate of Ardvorlich House, and if you are approaching from the Balquhiddy end, you will cross a small hump backed stone bridge some 4km from the A83. Parking is scant on this narrow road so choose your parking spot carefully so as not to interfere with the movement of other vehicles.

When you enter through the gates of Ardvorlich Estate you are immediately on a good road that leads up past the home farm where you will see a sign pointing to your right where you cross a little stone bridge. Beyond the bridge, you will now find a sign pointing to your left, which takes you away from Ardvorlich House and onto a sloping hardpack. It is worth remembering that you are now effectively in someone else's garden and that the house is not open to the public. The Stewarts of Ardvorlich and travellers have had an extraordinary tolerance for centuries; so don't you be the one to spoil it.

The hardpack wanders easily up through Glen Vorlich, with the burn bubbling away to your left through the tree line.



Ben Vorlich

centre and even if you have no intention of going to the top of Ben Vorlich, this is a wonderful spot for a family ramble. The views to the north over Loch Earn to Glen Beich and the fells beyond are particularly memorable. After about two kilometres of idyllic walking the hardpack ends at a little wooden bridge crossing Allt a' Coire Buidhe, the river of the yellow corry. On a fine day this is a beautiful little corner in which to rest for a short while. The river tumbles down over

the weather smoothed stones before rushing to meet with the Vorlich Burn far below, and on the other side of the bridge you can pick out the shape of the old field enclosures on the high parkland. Once over the bridge a narrow stony trail veers right and leads onto the coarse moorland at the bottom of the ben. The trail is strong and easy to follow, but after a wet spell there can be considerable run-off from Coire Buidhe and the ben, so don't be surprised if you get your feet wet.

When you have crossed the moorland you will now find

yourself on a rocky path that makes its way round the side of a large stone topped crag and the climb now becomes just a bit stiffer. Looking down to your right you can see the moorland running into Coire Buidhe and the lower slopes of Ben Or. Once around the crag you are up about 600m, only 385m to go, but it doesn't get any easier. Looking part way to your right you will find that you have a horrible great haunch to negotiate, so it's dig in time.

The stony trail up the haunch is firm and good and gives you plenty of grip, and once you breast the top, you get the first of the magnificent views far out over the Braes O' Balquhiddie to distant Ben More and its close neighbour Stob Binnean. At the top of the haunch you get a short respite where the ground levels off for a short way, then you are on the last and final climb, up the steep stony ridge to the summit. Like the haunch, the path is fairly good and soon you will see the O.S. pillar above you to welcome you in.

If any words of warning are required about Ben Vorlich, it must be that in anything but perfect conditions, stay well away from the east face. On your way up you could not help but notice Bealach Gliogarsnaich, that may sound like an unpronounceable Welsh railway station, but it certainly spells danger amidst its great boulder strewn steep faces. If you encounter low cloud, be very aware of its existence and stay strictly to the path.

Like Ben Ledi, the view from the top of Ben Vorlich is one of contrast. To the south the great flat plain of The Lowlands spreads far into the distance, while to the north and west, great serried rows of peaks vanish into the blue yonder, the only problem being which to try next, and of course, getting back down off of this one again.

TYNDRUM & CRIANLARICH TOURIST ASSOCIATION

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TYNDRUM & CRIANLARICH TOURIST ASSOCIATION Accommodation List

HOTELS

1. Ardlui Hotel	Ardlui.	0301 400243
2. Ben More Lodge Hotel.	Crianlarich.	0838 300210
3. Bridge of Orchy Hotel.	Bridge of Orchy.	0838 200208
4. Crianlarich Hotel.	Crianlarich.	0838 300272
5. Dalmally Hotel.	Dalmally.	0838 200444
6. Glen Orchy Lodge Hotel.	Dalmally.	0838 200312 & 200271
7. Invervey Hotel	Tyndrum.	0838 400219
8. Luib Hotel, Glendochart.	Crianlarich.	0567 820664
9. Royal Hotel.	Tyndrum.	0838 400272
10. Suie Lodge Hotel, Glen Dochart.	Crianlarich.	0567 820417

GUEST HOUSES.

11. Allt Chaorain, Country House, Crianlarich	0838 300283
	Fax 0838 300238
12. Craigbank Guest House.	Crianlarich. 0838 300279
13. Craig Villa Guest House.	Dalmally. 0838 200255
14. Glenardran Guest House.	Crianlarich. 0838 300236
15. Glengarry Guest House.	Tyndrum. 0838 400224
16. Orchy Bank Guest House.	Dalmally. 0838 200370
17. The Lodge House.	Crianlarich. 0838 300276

BED & BREAKFAST.

18. Dalkjell.	Tyndrum.	0838 400285
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BUNK HOUSES.

19. Youth Hostels Association.	Crianlarich.	0838 300260
20. Way Inn Bunkhouse.	Bridge of Orchy.	0838 400208
21. Pine Trees Leisure Park.	Tyndrum.	0838 400243

CARAVAN PARKS.

22. Glendochart Caravan Park.	Crianlarich.	0567 820637
23. Pine Trees Leisure Park.	Tyndrum.	0838 400243

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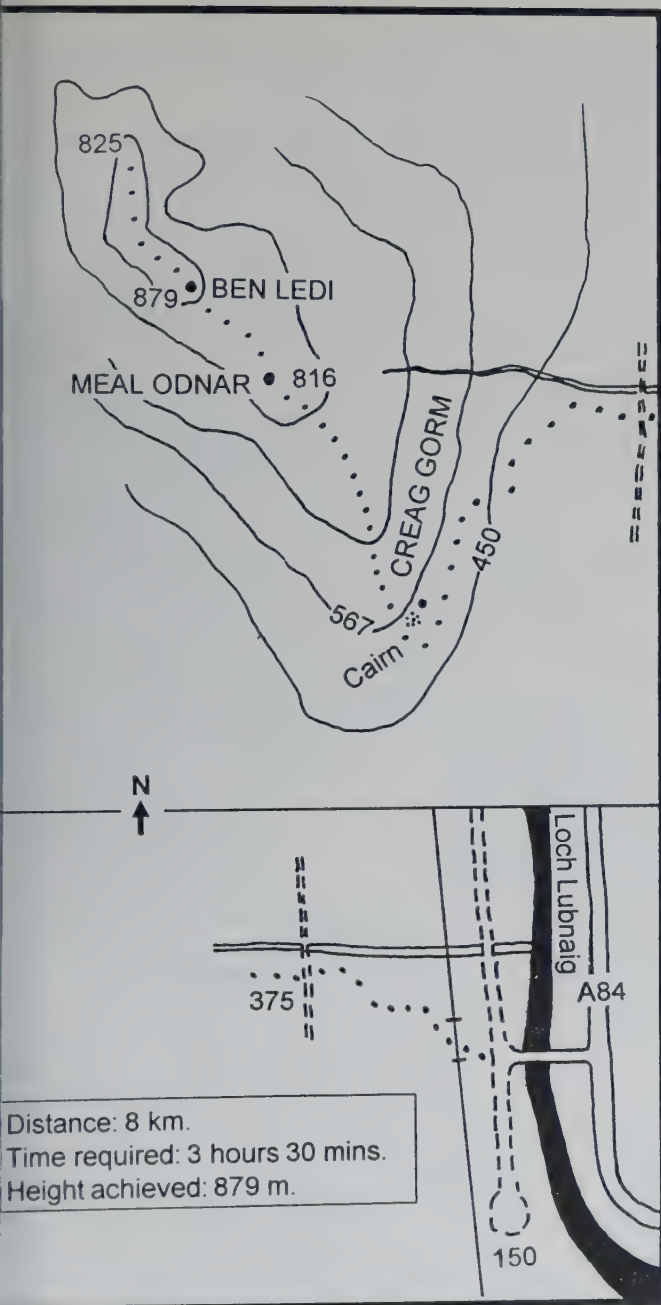
24. Glengarry House.	Tyndrum.	0838 300224
25. Lochdochart House.	Crianlarich.	0838 300274
26. Portnellen Lodges, Lochdochart.	Crianlarich.	0838 300284
27. The Bungalow.	Tyndrum.	0838 400275

RESTAURANTS.

28. Ben More Restaurant.	Crianlarich.	0838 300210
29. Clifton Coffee House.	Tyndrum.	0838 400271
30. Invervey Restaurant	Tyndrum.	0838 400219
31. Rod & Reel Bar & Restaurant.	Tyndrum	0838 300271
	Fax	0838 300261



Ben Ledi over Loch Lubnaig.



BEN LEDI.

Ben Ledi: No apparent translation. **Ardnandave Hill:** Height of the stag. **Loch Lubnaig:** The bent or crooked loch. **Meal Odnar:** Dun coloured hill. **Creag Gorm:** Blue crag.

Although Ben Ledi is the highest peak in this range of hills that runs along the west side of Loch Lubnaig from Loch Venacher in the south to Loch Voil at Balquhidder, it is probably the easiest one to ascend and makes for a pleasant days outing with spectacular views all around.

2.5 km south of Kilmahog on the A84 you will find a little bridge that crosses the river just beyond the Falls of Leny, once over the bridge turn hard to your left and you will find a good parking place.

The walk begins directly facing the bridge and you pass through a gate with a signpost marking the way, immediately you find yourself on a good stony track that leads up through the forest. As a rule, I dislike walks where I am channelled into narrow corridors, but the path created by the forestry has been particularly well made and gives a very convenient access to the hills above.

Making your way up on the well defined path you will reach a forest road running at right angles to your route, cross straight over the road and you will find the track continuing on the other side of the road. Following the second leg of the trail you will soon find that the trees begin to thin and you can now start to get glimpses of the surrounding countryside and, at this stage you will reach a deep gully to your right with one of the many unnamed rivers tumbling down through it. Running up the side of the gully is a long stony staircase, and on reaching the top of the staircase you will find that you have now shaken clear of the forest and are now entering on to a long coarse meadow.

Straight ahead of you the high rocky face of Creag Gorm rises steeply to the west side of Meal Odhar. The trail now slopes off to your left and you follow it over the meadow to

where it crosses the burn. Once over the burn you are now skirting around the slopes of Creag Gorm and still rising steadily. You will get wonderful views over your shoulder down towards Loch Lubnaig and into the throat of Glen Ample beyond Ardochullarie More.

For a short space of time you will find that you are now walking on a fairly level meadow and that the going is easy. To your right on this flat land you will see a small cairn which is followed by a pile of stone. At this juncture you must start climbing again, turning sharp right straight up the slope, but before you do, if you walk a short way over the moor you can get fine views down into Loch Venachar and over into Callander.

Once you start up the steeper slope you will soon find that old iron fence posts have been laid up along the trail and that following these posts makes walking up over the moorland simple enough. It's a straightforward steady climb, firstly over the shoulder of Meal Odhar and onto its summit at 816m. The moorland up here is broad and fairly flat so that walking is easy enough although you are still climbing steadily. After Meal Odhar, still following the markers, you will have two false summits before you can see the final peak of Ben Ledi.

Making your way onto the Ben Ledi summit you will find a scattering of rocky outcrops that will give reasonable shelter from the wind where you can enjoy a well earned rest. The summit itself is marked by a concrete plinth and the views are truly remarkable. To the south east you can see beyond Stirling to Grangemouth and the dull shimmering Firth of Forth.

Your enjoyment of Ben Ledi will be more complete if you take time to follow the long ridge that juts out towards the north, walking along its mossy slope for about 500m which will bring you to some of the finest views to be had from up here and it is well worth that little extra effort. While facing the north the remote Finglen reservoir twinkles away down to your left and ahead the moor and the high tops stretch away over Loch Voil to the distant Braes O' Balquhidder. Hill to right, the great bulk of Ardnardave Hill looms over Loch Lubnaig and Ardochullarie More with numerous small lochs to be seen glittering on the vast moorland.

Ben Vorlich, ever present among these hills, raises its head like an old friend; so many hills, and hopefully enough bright days in which to enjoy them, but in the meantime, back down the slope to Ben Ledi's peak and a safe journey back to your starting point.

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Schiehallion from Glen More

SCHIEHALLION.

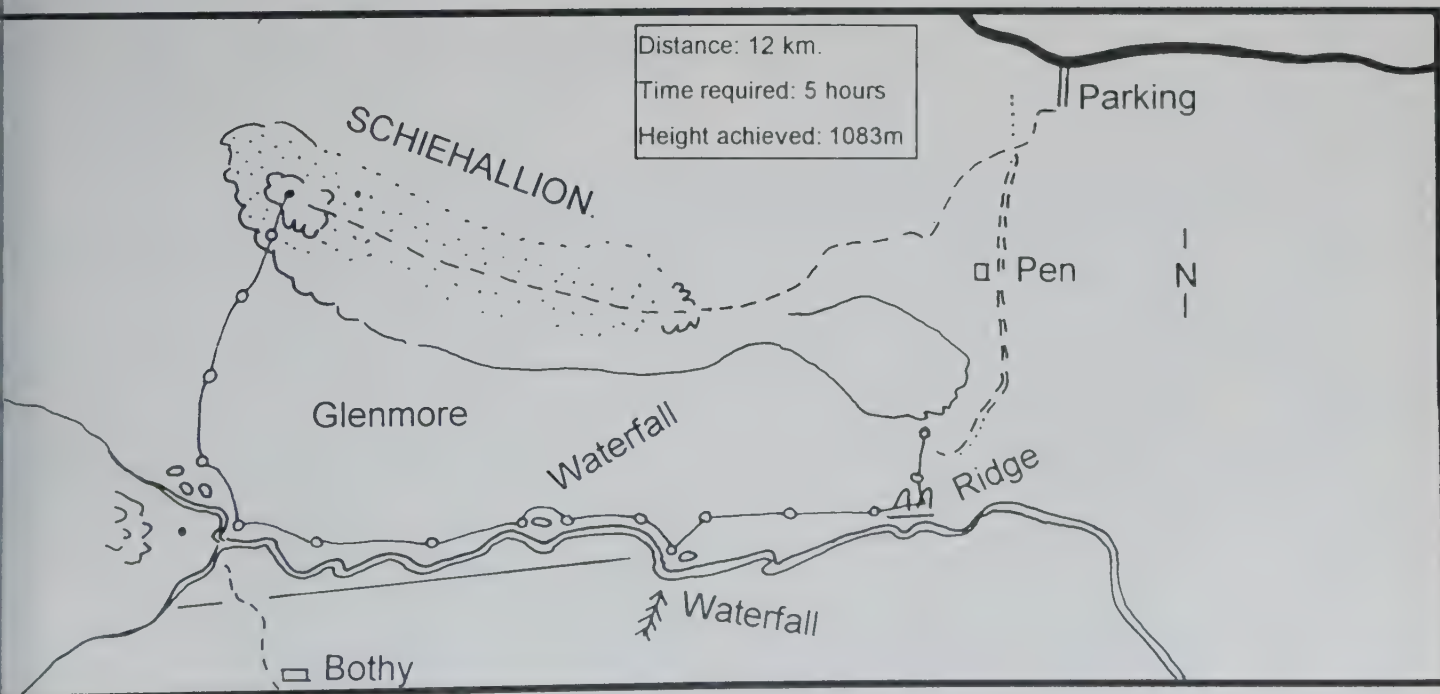
Schiehallion: Mount of the friendly people (pos.) Glen
more: Large glen.

" C aite a faicear anns an rioghachd,
Beinn is i iomhaich na Sithchaillinn,
An trusgan glan a Cheitein,
Na fo eire ghil na gaillon. "

" Not a Ben in all the kingdom,
With Schiehallion can compare,
In the verdure fresh of springtime,
Or in snowy mantle fair. "

For many people, the old Gaelic song says it all, Schiehallion has always had a mystical character about it, the very name Sithchaillinn associates it with the very early inhabitants of Scotland who built so many of their stone circles and burial mounds within sight of the sacred mountain. The Sithean, or Shean, lived and worked the land around here for some 2000 years before being swept away or absorbed by the adventurous Picts who called these people Sithean, or friendly people. The legends, myths and history of Schiehallion are slowly slipping from our memory, but a walk over its stony flanks or through its broad green glens can awaken dormant memories and add to the pleasure to be found while rambling within its sight.

To scale Schiehallion and enjoy the magnificent views to be had from the top makes an enjoyable days outing, but there is much more to be had from the lower slopes, so within this ramble I will attempt to combine both aspects so that the



walker may begin to appreciate that a whole network of routes is here to be opened up and explored.

Towards the end of the car park you will find a well used footpath that crosses a stile and heads in the direction of Schiehallion. Initially the walking is easy, and after a short time on the track you will reach a trail that crosses the path, this is the route from which you will eventually emerge at the end of the ramble. There is a large pile of marker stones at the intersection, so keep to the right on your original trail and soon you will find that you begin to rise quite steeply.

The first third of the route to the top is an undeniable slog upwards over well trodden ground that has been eroded over the years by countless feet, but it is easy to follow. Just as you reach the end of this section you will see ahead of you that the path splits, keep to the left and follow the trail up to a small crag. You will now have passed the most demanding part of the ascent, having travelled 2 km and reached a height of 750m.

Once on the small crag you now enter onto a long stony ridge that goes straight to the summit. As you gain more height the views become superb and the walking becomes easier. The whole ridge is made up of large broken slabs that require you to pick your way carefully, and you will see that at intervals small cairns have been erected to give you direction. remember that they could be very useful if you get caught in low

cloud or mist and have to make your way off of the mountain in these conditions. You should now be able to make your way across the stony ground fairly quickly, and in well under two hours from leaving the car park you will find yourself on the broad rocky summit of Schiehallion.

It was here, among these rocky hollows, that in 1860 the body of young Margaret Ritchie was found. Margaret had a deep interest in the religious movement that was sweeping the Highlands at the time, and Schiehallion had a religious fascination for her. She often said that she had to hold trysts with the angels amidst this calm scene. When she went missing from home, search parties were sent out, and she was eventually found, peaceably at rest in her long last rest sleep at the top of her mountain, at peace with her maker.

On a clear day you will be in good company, having travelled from Rannoch to the west with its loch and isle bounded by the Shepherds of Etive, and beyond, the mighty Ben Nevis, to the east the Tummel Valley with the mountains of Atholl in the distance. To the north lies Ben Macdhu and the Cairngorms and all around you, the towering peaks of Ben Lawers, Ben More and Cruachan. Looking down to the south you can see

the broad expanse of Glen More with its bright tumbling river, and on the nearside, just beyond the glen you will be able to pick out the stone building that is Glen More bothy which sits astride the old hill route to Loch Tay and Glen Lyon. When you are ready to move on, ease yourself down from the rocky plateau of



the summit onto the scree laden south slope and keeping the bothy to your left make your way down the slope, once on your way it is a surprisingly simple descent with ample foot and hand holds.

Once below the scree line the lush growing heather may cause a few problems as it obscures hidden obstacles, but you will find that your descent is fairly rapid and relatively simple, having dropped about 630m over the short distance of about a kilometre.

If you have kept the bothy to your left you will now find that you are on a flat stretch of land beside the Glenmore Burn, still sometimes called Allt More, the big river. On the opposite bank you will see the slope of Creag an Earra, and this little triangle where the two rivers meet has been long steeped in legend and history. By the banks of the river you will find a large number of early settlement remains, Glen More, like many now empty glens, would have at one time sustained a surprisingly large population.

Here in the glen many refugees took shelter after Culloden, as did Sir Robert Graham centuries earlier after the murder of King James the First. Then, the glen was totally different, being covered by the great forest of Osshiechalis, now you will have difficulty in finding any sort of tree. But the history of this small place goes far beyond that. Old writings describing the area tell of a stone that sat at the confluence of the rivers, that had more cup and ring markings on its surface than any other known in the country. I have searched for this stone, as have others to my knowledge, but as yet, have never been able to locate it. Perhaps it is still there, hidden among the heather.

Another curiosity in this little corner is the small cave, now mostly filled in, that was, according to the people who lived here, the home of mischievous fairies and goblins and is known as Uamh Tom a' Mhor-fhir, the cave by the hill of the large men. This is a pleasant place in which to explore for a little while but when you are ready to move on follow the river to where it meets with another stream at a small gravel delta directly opposite the broad meadow below the bothy.



From where the two rivers meet, follow the left bank over the moorland picking up the small trails where you find them. Walking is easy enough and it's very pleasant following the river with the long ridge of Schiehallion ever present for company.

After a time following the meandering river you will come to a spot where the river tumbles through a narrow gorge in a series of interesting waterfalls, and close beside the river you will find a collection of old house foundations, each set up on its own little earth mound to keep it clear of the damp moorland. Nothing that I have ever read about Glen More points to there having been a sheiling culture, so I am inclined to think that this, and the other remains to be found are from a permanent settlements. It often comes as a shock to people when they begin to realise that their ancestors, not so very long ago, emerged from tiny little hovels just like these. It may seem incredible, but many large and healthy families were raised in these places where they thought nothing of tramping the many miles to school or church.

Once past this small settlement you will cross a small burn running into the main river, and here the river begins to swing to the right. On the edge of the heather you will pick up a good strong footpath and follow it until you are opposite

an immense scar on the hillside beyond the river. You must now cross over some damp moorland to where you will find the most beautiful waterfalls tumbling down through the pink granite. Particularly after heavy rain or when the snows are melting, they can be exceptionally dramatic, and for me at any rate, rather wonderful. I love this place, and can quite happily lose myself here among the water sculptured stones and enjoy the clear cascading water for hours on end.

But, time moves on, and with the shadows lengthening it is time to draw clear of Glen More. From the moor on top of the waterfalls, where you will find many more house remains, you must again cross over the damp moorland to the path and follow it along the edge of the river bank.

Looking ahead you will see a long yellow topped ridge that runs close to, and parallel with the river. Follow the path towards the ridge, and as you approach it, you will find that the path runs into a stretch of green mossy ground to the left of the ridge. Running down into the mossy ground, which can be a bit wet and spongy, a small burn runs down through a deep gorge that is topped by one solitary tree. Just beyond the small gorge another bright green mossy swathe runs uphill and you now follow this up to the brow.

When you breast the small summit, look half right and you will see a small cairn of white stones marking the top of a hillock. Cross the short stretch of heather clad moorland to the base of the hillock and you will find the first remnants of an old peat road amidst the heather. During the middle of summer when the heather is particularly thick it can be a bit difficult to spot, but it is there. After a short distance you will lose sight of the road where it runs into what looks like a deep drainage ditch, it is in fact part of the road track that has carried water run off, so in time forming a water channel. Follow the channel slightly downhill and before it vanishes you will again be able to pick up the twin trammels of the track amidst the heather and running to your left. Again after a short way the track vanishes among a litter of small stones where another burn has washed over the trail. Beyond the litter of stones you will again be able to pick up a trace of

the road, and as you travel along it, the trail begins to strengthen, so that you can see it meander over the moor far ahead of you.

Once firmly on the track you will begin to make good time and soon reach a collection of dry-stane sheep pens with the walls standing to a height of three feet or so. Beyond the sheep pens it is now only a short walk to where this road converges with your original trail up to Schiehallion, and the short walk back to the car park.

If you have any doubts about picking up the peat road in Glen More, then take time to reverse the walk back to the waterfall, and you will have a most enjoyable day's outing.

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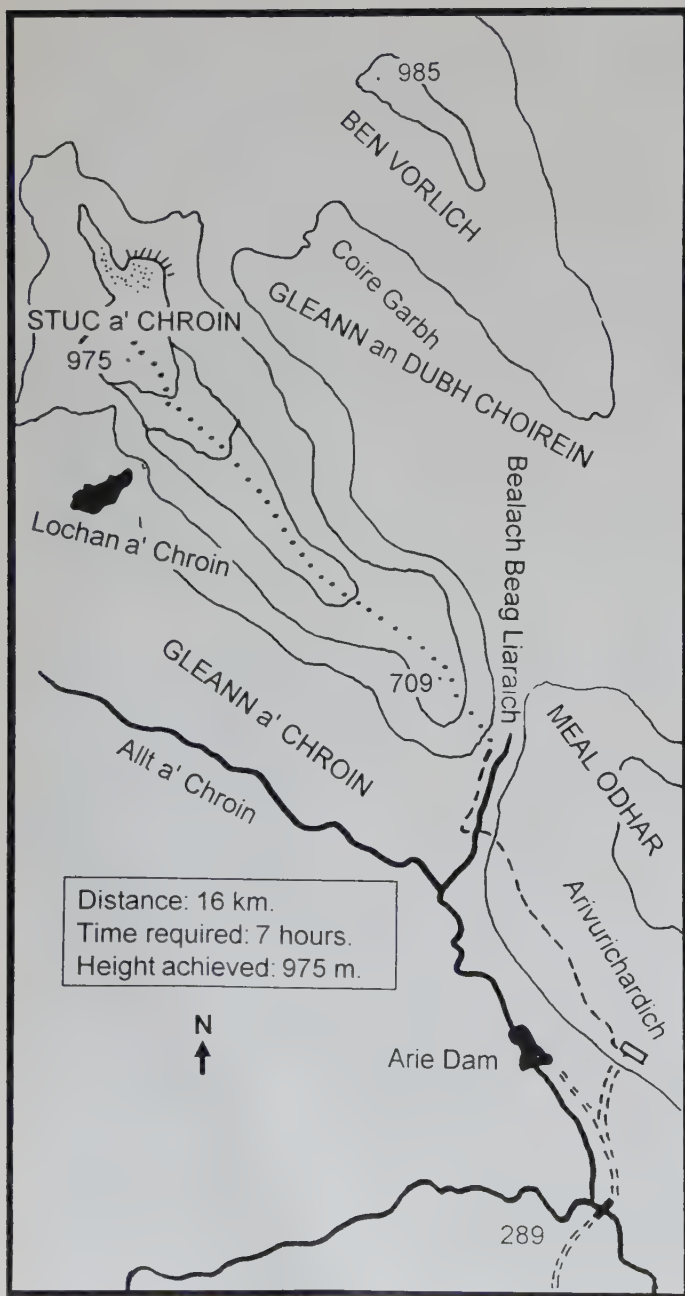


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STUC a' CHROIN.

Stuc a' Chroin: The bent ridge. **Arivurichardich:** The hill pasture. **Bealach Beg Liarach:** Small grey pass.

The high imposing finger of Stuc a' Chroin is best seen from Ben Vorlich or Ben Or, but the enjoyable route to the summit starts far over the hills at Callander.

From Callander High Street drive up the road marked To The Falls Of Bracklinn and The Golf Course, and very quickly this becomes a narrow road that requires caution. Three kilometres up this road it ends at the entrance to Drumardoch Farm and here with a little care you can find a parking spot, but remember, this is the entrance to two busy working farms and you must in no way impede the movement of farm vehicles.

Walk down the road to Braeleny Farm and this leads you through the edge of the farmyard and on to a good hardpacked road that you can follow through the moors for three kilometres. As you approach the old farm of Arivurichardich the road forks with the left fork leading to Ari Reservoir, but you take the right fork through the gate and up to the old farmhouse. The old farm sits at the juncture of two very old hill routes. To the right a trail leads through the hills to Glen Artney and Comrie, while the left trail, which we must follow, leads up and through the pass of Liarach, Bealach Beg Liarach to Gleann an Dubh Choirein, the glen of the dark corry.

Follow the trail to the left which you will find beside the gable of the house and it will lead you through the old farmyard and up onto the lower slopes of Meall Odhar, where you pass through a gate, the well used path swings right beside the fence and you can now follow it unhindered over the lower slopes of Meall Odhar for about one and a half kilometres to the top of the pass.

This is a good trail that takes you up a fairly gentle incline until you meet a deep gully with a strong river running through it. When you cross the gully, you now follow the



Stuc a' Chroin.

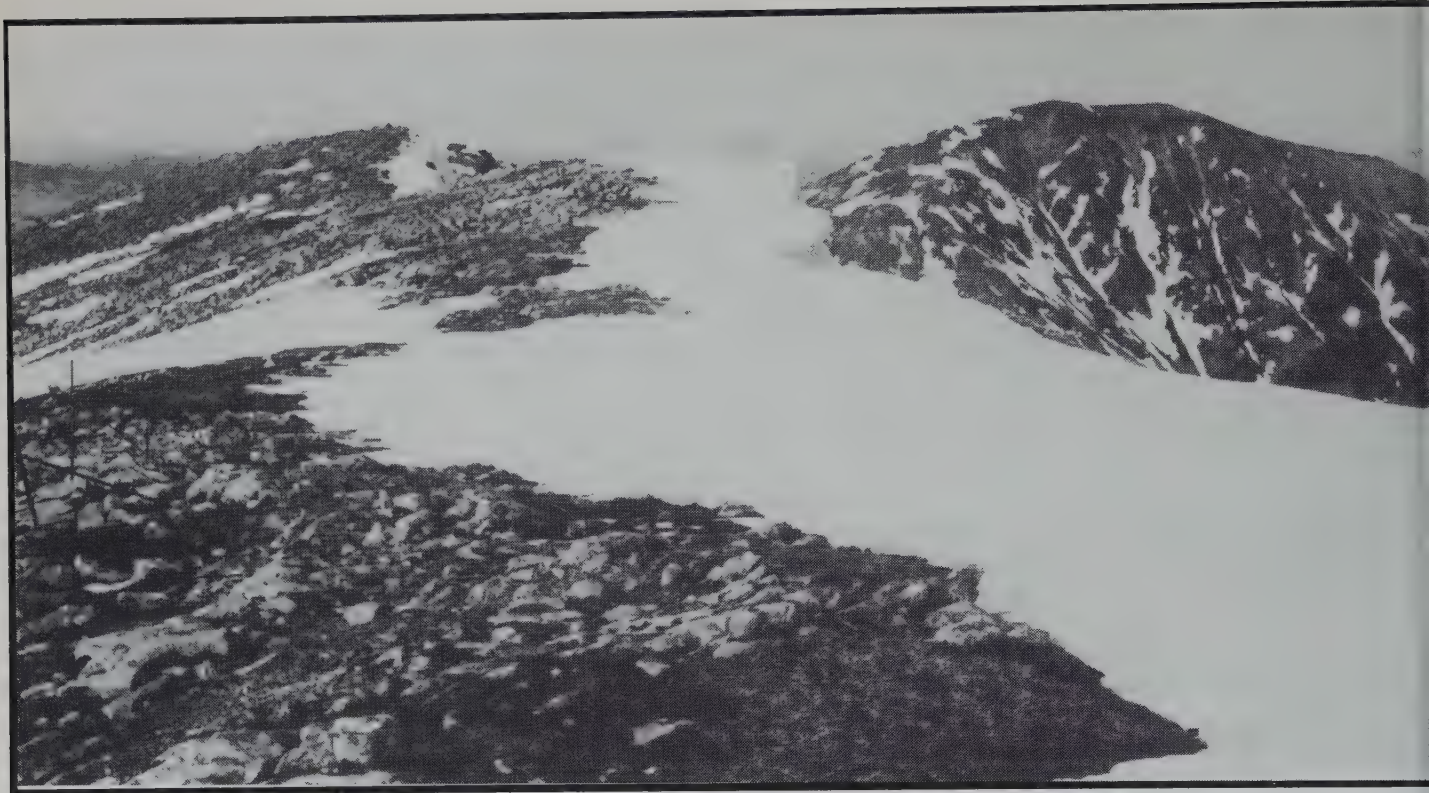
th upwards towards the peat hags at the centre of the pass where it ends at the base of Stuc a' Chroin Ridge. From here, the start of the ridge just looks like a rounded hill, so you must now start your ascent. It's fairly straightforward but choose your own way up and when you breast the top you will find a small cairn at 709m.

At this point you are now on a long rounded ridge that leads for just under three kilometres to the high finger of Stuc a' Chroin. This high moorland is easy for walking on and you

will find trails over it, but you can choose your own way over the moor to get the best views.

After some enjoyable walking, you will see ahead of you the peak of Stuc a' Chroin, and to the right of it the unmistakable shape of Ben Vorlich.

It's a sharp climb up to the peak, but at the top you will find a broad stony expanse with the cairn marking the peak. The actual finger of the peak is only a little further on and, with a little care, you will be able to stand on it for a whole series of remarkable views.



The peak of Stuc a' Chroin with Ben Vorlich beyond.

As you will be able to see, it's no great problem to cross the ridge that leads over onto Ben Vorlich and then follow the long spine back towards Bealach Beg Liarach, but that's something you may want to explore for yourself.

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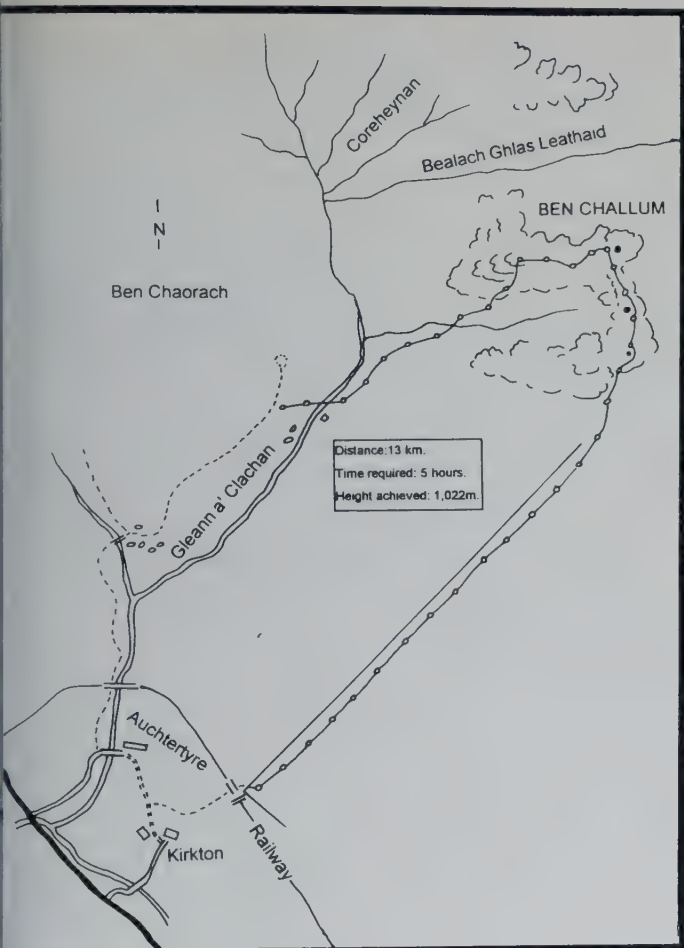
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Ben Challum.



BEN CHALLUM.

Ben Challum: Calum's mount. **Gleann a' Clachan:** Glen of the stone settlement. **Beinn Chaorach:** Mount of the sheep. **Bealach Ghlas Leathaid:** Grey pass on the slope. **Coreheyman:** Corry of the waterfall.

The lands of Strathfillan stretch between Tyndrum to the north and Crianlarich to the south, and Ben Challum, at 1,022m, straddles both the ancient lands of Strathfillan and Glen Lochay to the north east.

Travelling north from Crianlarich on the A82 you will firstly pass the slip road for Kirkton on your right and shortly after that you will find the less noticeable road for Auchtertyre. This little slip road crosses a small bridge over the River Fillan, and the pool below the bridge is known as St. Fillans pool, a place long endowed with magical healing powers.

Every month, towards the end of the first quarter of the moon, hundreds of people used to gather here from all over the district and beyond to bath in the magic waters of the pool. After bathing in the pool, the people would then gather nine stones from the water and walk three times around the three cairns that were there, dropping a stone on each cairn as they passed. As with old Celtic customs that pre-date Christianity, the bathers walked deaschal around the cairns, that is, sunwise. After this ceremony the bathers would then discard a piece of their clothing from the part of their body that they hoped to heal, so that the cairns "were littered with gloves, shoes, bonnets, night caps, rags of all kind, kilts, petticoats, garters and smocks." so reported one English traveller who visited the pool during August of 1798.

It's a short walk along the road to the farm and hamlet of Auchtertyre and just by the small bridge that leads over to the hamlet you will find a rough hardpack trail on your left. Follow this trail upwards and it will eventually take you underneath a railway viaduct. Beyond the viaduct the trail is reasonably good and following it you will cross a bridge over Allt a' Chaol Ghlinne, the river of the narrow glen. At the fork just beyond the bridge the left arm goes into the narrow

glen between Beinn Chaorach and Meall Buidhe. On the fields below the road you can find the remains of the original stone settlement. When you take the right fork you are now walking parallel to Allt Gleann a' Clachan and Creag Loisgte which is on the opposite side of the river.

As you amble along the road you will now see the great bulk of Ben Challum looming up ahead of you and in time you will be able to clearly see a collection of sheep pens on the opposite bank of the river, which means that you will be shortly leaving the road. It ends fairly soon anyway, on the side of Beinn Chaorach, so can be of no further use to you.

Once you have just past the sheep pens you should now take a good look at your prospective route. The main bulk of Ben Challum has, on this face, a great scree littered corry with a deep gully running out of it. On either side of the corry are two long ridges running up to the summit and if you look at the furthest away ridge, you will see a rocky nose part way up. That is the position that you should now be aiming for.

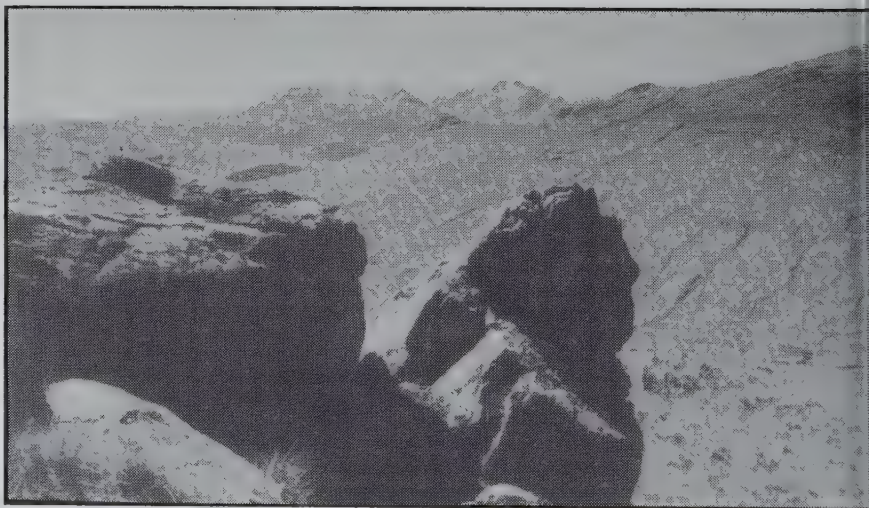
You should now leave the road and start to slope down the long embankment to the river, which you must now cross at a suitable point. Once over, you now start heading up over the coarse moor towards the rocky nose. From leaving the road to reaching the nose is about 1.5km and along the way you will pass over the deep gully which carries the river down from Corrie nan Each, the corry of the horse.

From the road, the ridge appears to be well defined, but once you reach it you will find that it is broad and rounded and may not even realise that you have, in fact reached it. When you cross the gully you will have a reasonably stiff climb until reaching an outcrop of large boulders, this tells you that you are now somewhere on the nose, and from here you get the most magnificent views far over towards Ben Lui and Ben Oss and, looking northward you can see Beinn Dorain from a most unusual angle.

Once above the nose you will now find that you are on the great scree laden ridge above the corry, as I have already mentioned it is not in the least well defined, but walking is not difficult and as you rise the views become even better.

In time the scree becomes a bit denser and you will now be able to see the top of the corry and the pass that joins both the ridges framing the unmistakable peaks of Ben More and Stob Binnean. Don't be tempted to slope off towards the pass but stay climbing the ridge and, once you breast the top you will be rewarded with the most magnificent and dramatic views when you look over the now sheer edge of the ridge down into Bealach Ghlas Leathaid, the grey pass. You can now easily follow the sheer ridge up to the large cairn at the top.

From the cairn you can see how Strathfillan and Glen Lochay are joined by the pass that now runs below you, and looking east into Glen Lochay, you can see the little farm buildings dotted along its length. Gleann a' Clachan may have long since been deserted, but Glen Lochay is still a busy and vibrant community.



Ben Lui and Ben Oss from the rocky nose



Looking over towards the other peak you will see that a well defined path crosses over the divide and that you can follow it over into a great jumble of confused rocks and up to the other cairn where the views are different, but just as impressive. Because of Ben Challum's central position, you can just about see every worthwhile mountain within the Central Highlands from here, I won't list them, you can do that for yourself.

What goes up, must come down, so when you are ready to leave you can retrace your steps and exit through Gleann a' Clachan again or; take the easy way. Looking vaguely south you will see another cairn quite a distance off, you now wander over the moor to this cairn and, from here, looking down the hill, you will see a massive fencing stob. This is the beginning of a fence that you can follow religiously all the way home.

When I say follow the fence religiously, I mean just that, the fence takes the best route over the moorland, around Creag Loisgte, over the burn, through an old gate and after five kilometres leaves you on the small ridge overlooking Kirkton, at which point you will find another fence across your path. Step over the fence that you have been following so assiduously and slope off down the small green hill to where you will find a level crossing, placed there for your convenience, so that you may safely cross the railway.

Once over the level crossing you pass through a dyke and will be able to see the road below you, that you follow back to your starting point. If time or energy permit, it's worthwhile having a look at the remains of the ancient priory and graveyard at Kirkton.

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Glendochart, by Killin, Perthshire.

Telephone: 0567 820 434.

Almost three hundred years ago, as an Inn, weary travellers through Glen Dochart were able to find good food and comfort here, now, after a long period as a working mill, travellers can once again find good food and comfort.



The Old Mill Restaurant has a wide and varied menu of good food and home baking to be enjoyed in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere, and no problems of parking.

In the forecourt where coaches

once dropped the travellers, you will find ample parking space, even for caravans.

After a hard day on Ben More, Stob Binnean, Kirkton Glen or the dozens of the surrounding peaks, where better to satisfy your appetite? And we will be delighted to serve you.

fishers hotel

Main Street, Killin,
Perthshire.

Telephone: 0567 820285



Set at the heart of beautiful Killin, Fishers is a family run hotel that has long had a reputation for it's warm and homely service.

The public bar, popular with locals and visitors alike, is just the rendezvous in which to meet old friends or make new acquaintances.

Or you can enjoy a well prepared meal in the relaxed surroundings of the comfortable lounge, where you will at times find live entertainment.

Open all year, the comfortable bedrooms, some en-suite, have colour T.V and tea/coffee making facilities.

Whether walking, climbing, enjoying the scenery or just passing through, you will always find a warm welcome at Fishers.

DALL LODGE COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL

Main Street, Killin,
Perthshire FK21 8TN.



Telephone: 0567 820217 Fax: 0567 820726

Whether you're looking for an overnight stop or a two week break, you can look forward to a warm welcome, good food and comfort with character at the Dall Lodge.

All our rooms are en-suite, centrally heated with T.V., telephone and tea/coffee making facilities.

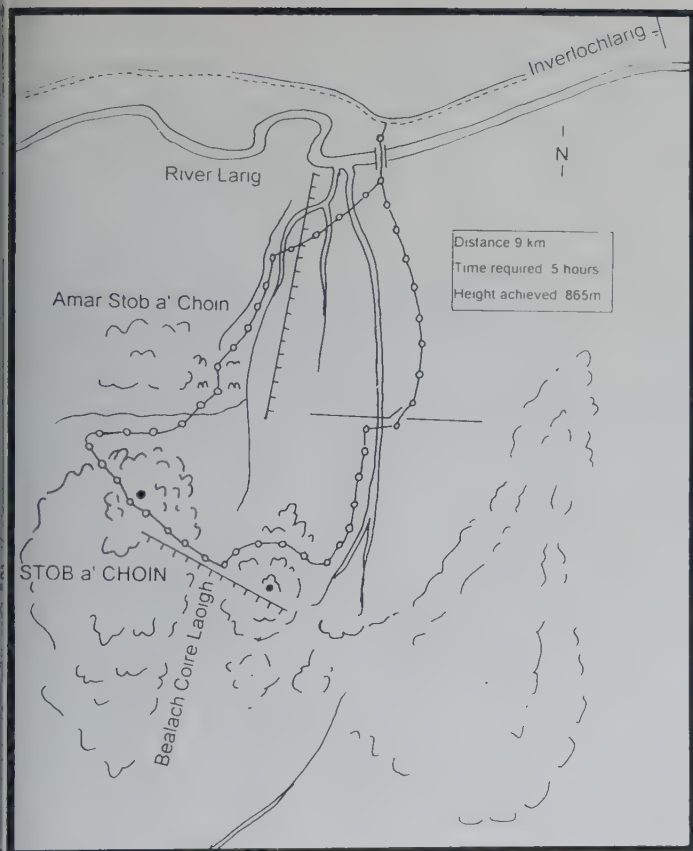
In the dining room we specialise in providing the best of Scottish ingredients, simply cooked in traditional ways. You can try local caught salmon or venison, followed by "Scottish Cranachan" with whisky and oatmeal.

Or after a hard day on the hills, a steaming bowl of Cullen Skink - home-made fish soup, then round off your meal in our luxurious conservatory with a couple of malt whiskies.

For more information, give us a ring, we are here to oblige.



Loch Voil with Stob a' Choin beyond.



STOB a' CHOIN.

Stob a' Choin: Stack of the dog. **Amar:** Trough or gully. **Beinn Tulaichean:** Mountain with the breach. **Inverlochlarig:** Confluence of Loch Larig. **Bealach Corry an Laoigh:** The pass of the calves.

Because dogs or hounds feature so prominently in Celtic culture, I would dearly love to know the legend that gave this mountain its name but, unfortunately, that knowledge is long lost from the folk memory of this glen. But what we can understand, is that this rugged mountain with its deep gorges and stony corries was once a highway between the people on the northern shores of Loch Katrine, which is only 4 km

to the south and, through Bealach an Laoigh, to Inverlochlarig where, incidentally, Rob Roy McGregor spent the last of his days.

When you leave the A85 and take the Balquhiddy road you will find it a tortuous seven miles before you reach the car park at Inverlochlarig but, if you take care on this twisting narrow road it is an interesting drive along Loch Voil.

From the car park you now enter onto the private road that leads towards the farm and hamlet, incidentally, the stile beside the car park is the route onto Stob Binnean, if you ever want to go that way. This is a good hardpack road and leads you past the hamlet and through the farm yard, you will notice to your right, a signpost pointing towards Inverlochlarig Glen which is another hill route that would take you through to Crianlarich. This busy little place seems to be the meeting point for so many hill routes and passes.

When you have passed through the farmyard you will still be on a good hardpack road that leads deep into the glen with the River Larig to your left and you will now have a fair view of Stob a' Choin ahead of you. Just over a kilometre beyond the farm you will find a rickety wooden bridge that crosses the river and this you must now cross. On the other side you will see the low remains of a long dry stane dyke, and for simplicity, you may follow the dyke until you meet with a fence that runs up the hill beside a small river and away from a collection of sheep pens by the side of the River Larig. In fact it is just as easy to cross obliquely over the low moor heading towards a point where the fence meets with an outcrop of trees that fringe a very deep gully.

As you pass over the moor you must cross a small burn that runs down from the deep Corrie an Laoigh, which is a long way above you and the way that you may eventually leave the mountain. When you arrive at the tree fringe you will see a gate in the fence and here you may safely cross the gully which runs all the way to the summit of the pass, Bealach an Laoigh. On the other side of the gully you will now find a small burn on your right and above you, terraces of cliff

faces. You must now start heading upwards towards these cliff faces and should keep the small burn to your right. This will lead you up through a gap in the first row of tree lined faces and then upwards again through the centre of the next row of cliffs. This position will give you wonderful views down into the floor of the glen and the majestic mountains beyond.

On your right you now have the rocky knolls of Amar Stob a' Choin and dead ahead of you will be the peak of Stob a' Choin itself. The way to the top is not by a frontal assault on the peak, but you will see that behind Amar there is a long moorland pass rising up between the peak and the right hand rocky knolls. A narrow channel that sometimes carries a burn runs down the centre of it and, you should now begin to follow it up towards the ridge.



When you breast the ridge you will see that you are on a fairly level piece of moorland and that if you go to the edge above Amar, you will find that you have fantastic views far down into the glen and can see the road stretching off to where it ends on the lower slopes of Beinn a' Chroin to the west.

Between you and the summit there is another long drag up the moorland slopes, but the hillside is terraced, and if you just keep climbing you will encounter the little rocky necklace that is just below the main peak, and from here you will get more fine views far over the shoulder of Beinn Tulaichean to distant Ben More and Stob Binnean. One more small effort will bring you to the lonely little cairn and the top of Stob a' Choin.

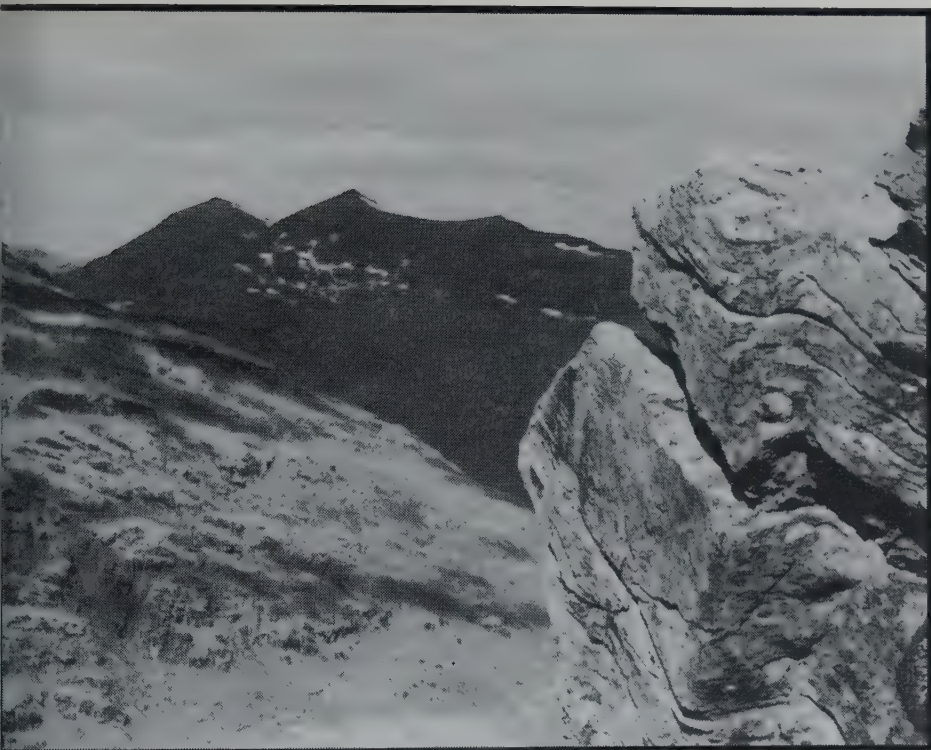
Not many walkers visit this lonely little outpost, which is a pity, because, to say that the views from the top are wonderful, is a total understatement. This little cairn sits in a venerable company, to the north, mighty Beinn Tulaichean and Cruach Ardrain raise their massive heads and blend with the distant Ben More and Stob Binnean. To the south it's a different story, Loch Katrin stretches east west below you and far beyond that, the north face of Ben Lomond rises through the mists of distance. But so much more is hidden below you but unseen, Loch Arklet and Glen Gyle lie with

the folds of mountains between here and Loch Lomond, linked by rare and used passes that were once so common to the traveller.

Once up on this beautiful little mountain it seems such a pity to waste the journey by eating your sandwiches behind the cairn and then bolting back down the same way as you came up, particularly as there are so many other options open to you. You can walk round the whole crescent of the mountain and exit from the east

ridge which would bring you in time back to the bridge over the River Larig, or take the route through Corrie an Laoigh which you would have noticed at the start of the journey

To take this option start walking east parallel to the glen road, you will cross a little depression with a little square hillock on your right and shortly will find that there is an old iron fence crossing the moorland on your right. You now follow the old fence and this will bring you to a very deep depression with a high peak beyond it, this is Bealach an Laoigh, the pass of the calves. If you look down the pass to



Ben More & Stob Binnean from the necklace of the peak.

your right you will see that it runs fairly gently down onto low moor that leads towards Loch Katrin, and no doubt was once in common use for joining the two glens.

The fence that you were following now runs hard up the opposite slope, but unless you are about to walk around the full crescent, then there is no need to follow it up to the peak. Cross over the pass and slope to your left around the base of the peak. When you find a comfortable contour just stay with it and in time you will again be able to look out over the glen and the River Larig.

Up here you must now be reasonably careful as many of the little grassy banks may lead to very steep cliffs on the other side. You will now be able to see that off to your right is the

dark recess of the corry. From whatever position you find yourself in, make your way into the corry itself and you will find a very deep gully at the head of the corry. This gully is the one that carries the river down to your starting point.

You can now begin to follow the river down on the near bank. Although initially fairly steep it will pose you no problems and when you pass a large boulder with a rowan growing from it you will find that the bank by the river becomes quite a comfortable descent. Looking down the slope you will see a fence below you and that the fence crosses the river, this should be your next stop.

Where the fence crosses the river you will find that you too may cross with ease and that on the other side you have a convenient little gate that now leads you out onto the lower meadows of the hill. From here it is now a fairly pleasant meander back down over the meadow to the bridge over

the Larig. If you had carried on around the rim, the long ridge to the east is where you would have exited, just somewhere above the convenient little gate. Well; perhaps next time.



The little cairn is in venerable company

SUIE LODGE HOTEL

Glen Dochart, Crianlarich, Perthshire FK20 8QT

Phone (0567) 820417

Suie Lodge is a small family run hotel, situated in scenic Glen Dochart. Once a shooting lodge, this unique hotel is fully licensed with eleven comfortable bedrooms many en-suite and all with tea/coffee making facilities. The hotel is centrally heated with drying facilities for those not so dry days on the hills.

In the dining room a varied Scottish menu is served using the best of Scottish produce, including salmon, venison, Scotch lamb and beef - these being a few of the hotel's specialities.

*And the name SUIE LODGE ?
Well that's a tale in itself - why
not ask Moira or Jim Reilly, they
can tell you.*

ALLT-CHAORAIN COUNTRY HOUSE



Welcome to my home.

Where the log fire and the friendly atmosphere compliment our traditional meals made from local fresh produce, and allows the most reserved of guests to relax and exchange the day's experience with new made friends or old acquaintances.

*Contact: Mr. Roger McDonald, Allt Chaorain Country House, Crianlarich,
Perthshire FK20 8RU. Phone: (0838) 300 283. Fax: (0838) 300 238.*



MONACHYLE MHOR

In the land of hills and lochs, the award winning **Monachyle Mhor** sits in its own 2,000 acres of farmland in the heart of the Braes O' Balquhidder.

It is a small family run Farmhouse Hotel of great character and offers a unique blend of modern comfort and country living.

All bedrooms are en-suite and in the restaurant and cosy bar you will find good food and a wealth of hospitality. Not unexpectedly the Hotel is a Taste of Scotland and A.A. recommended as well as being Three Crown commended.

For those who like to go as they please the Hotel has three luxury self catering cottages that sleep between 2 and 8 people. The Hotel is open all year so give Rob or Jean a ring, they will be delighted to hear from you.

BALQUHIDDER, LOCHEARNHEAD, PERTSHIRE.

Tel: (0877) 384622 Fax: (0877) 384305



Clachaig Hotel

**FALLS OF DOCHART,
KILLIN, PERTSHIRE.**

A fine old traditional Scots Hotel with a welcoming character lounge converted from a former Smithy. **The Clachaig**, which overlooks the spectacular Falls of Dochart, is a 9 bedroom family run hotel (holiday cottages also available) long renowned as a favourite watering place for hillwalkers and climbers at any time of the year. The well stocked bar includes a wide range of Malt Whiskies.

A Fine Salmon Beat on Loch Tay - Hill Walking - Skiing - Golfing
- Egon Ronay's Pub Guide - All Day Licence

The Hotel also has its own Salmon Beat on the River Dochart.

ROUTIER RECOMMENDED DINING ROOM

Proprietors: John & Maureen Mallinson.

Telephone Killin (0567) 820 270



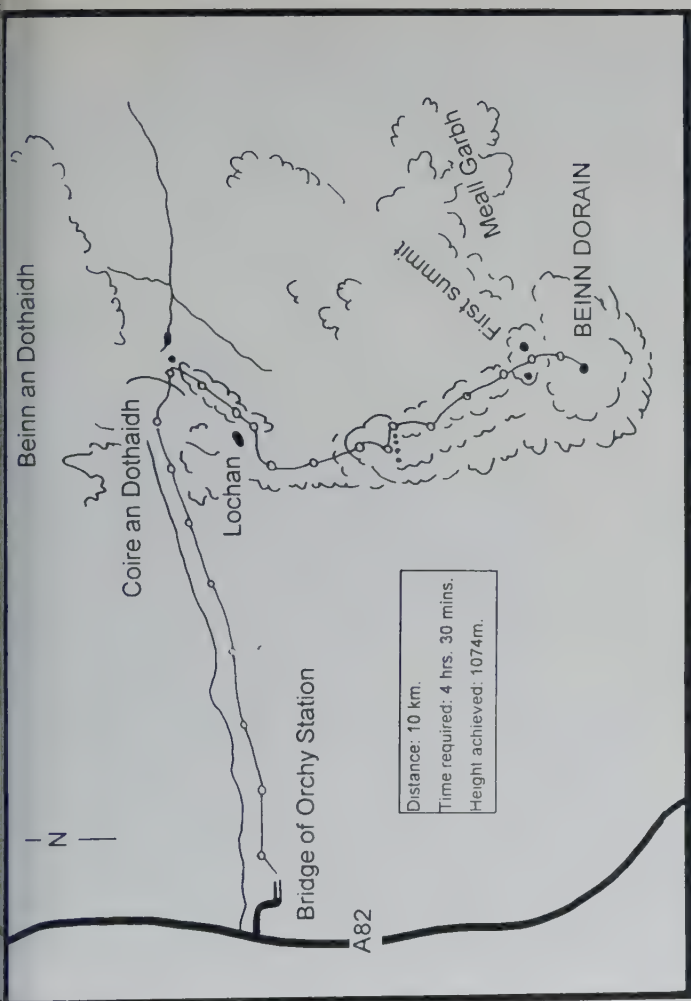
BEINN DORAIN.

Beinn Dorain: Otter shaped mountain. **Allt Coire an Dothaidh:** Stream of the singed corry. **Corrie an Dothaidh:** Scorched hollow. **Allt Corrie a' Ghabhalach:** Stream of the tacksman's corry. (small landholder) **Meall Garbh:** Rough mound.

No one entering Glen Coe and looking up at this massive stark pinnacle can ever ignore the temptation to stand on its oft cloud wreathed summit, as it is perhaps one of the most beautiful looking peaks in the area with a peculiar aura all of

its own. To gain the summit is not the most difficult of walks but I would encourage you to wait for a good clear day before taking off for the stony peak of Beinn Dorain.

The walk starts at the Bridge of Orchy railway station. Leave your car in the station car park and walk through the underpass which brings you to a metal gate, and straight across from the gate you will find a well used footpath leading upwards onto the low moor. Because of the great amount of water run-off that comes down from the great



Corrie an Dothaidh and Beinn Dorain, you can expect the path to be very wet, unless there has been a good long dry spell.

The path is easy to follow and takes you over the small burns and long stretches of boggy ground, but in time you will find yourself looking up into the mouth of Corrie an Dothaidh which is a great three sided rock corrie between Beinn an Dothaidh and Beinn Dorain. Follow the path into the far end of the corrie and you will find that you now have to climb the small face in front of you. In dry weather you can use the narrow stony path that goes straight up the centre, but in wet times I tend to keep well to the right of the path and head up over the brow by way of the grassy slope.

Once over the brow you will see another ridge ahead and a bit to your left, make your way up onto the stony ridge and you will find a small cairn on the other side with a tiny lochan beside it that feeds Allt Coire a' Ghabhalach which drops steeply away into Glen Auch.

Following the path away from the cairn will lead you onto a great boulder strewn ridge and you will now find the walking

The final summit of Beinn Dorain.





Glen Coe from the rocky heights of Beinn Dorain.

up here much easier. Once you have gained a bit of height and cleared the boulder ridge, the ridge then levels out to a flat rocky plateau and you must now break right over a small depression which leads you onto flat moorland. When you cross onto the moorland you will find a small lochan and you should be to the left of this.

From the lochan you follow the little stony trail over the

moor and start ascending the red footpath into the crags. As you near the top, the trail runs close beside a rocky crag on your left, and at this spot a row of large stones have been laid across the path, this is an indication that you must now split left up onto the crag and here you will find a good footpath that takes you over the top of the many little crags.

The trail will bring you to a high peak with two well built cairns. If the weather is misty, and that is not uncommon

don't be fooled into thinking that you have reached the top, you still have one more peak to go.

Beyond the main cairn the trail dips down sharply and you must now follow it down and then follow the steep ridge up to the final peak, here you will now find a solitary cairn and the top of Beinn Dorain.

The views from up here are magnificent, Glen Coe rolls away northwards, the twin horns of mighty Ben Cruachan beckon to the west and Ben Lomond, Ben More, Stob Binnean and a thousand other peaks wait for you.



This privately run Hotel situated in the Highlands enjoys a spectacular setting on the shores of Loch Earn. The original "**Clachan**" that dates back some two hundred and fifty years has been modernised and extended into a twenty bedroom hotel all rooms having private facilities. :

Centrally placed for many day trips to include the scenic West Coast, Trossachs, Stirling Castle, Edinburgh and Blair Atholl to name but a few.

For the energetic there are twenty six golf courses within an hour. Many scenic walks and Munro's to climb. Water sports include Windsurfing and Sailing.

'TASTE OF SCOTLAND RECOMMENDED RESTAURANT OVERLOOKING LOCH'

Open fires, relaxing atmosphere and friendly service. Frequent live music.

Three day Golf, Dinner Dance and Festive Breaks.

A Warm Welcome Awaits You.

Please contact:- ANDREW LOW,

CLACHAN COTTAGE HOTEL,

LOCHEARNHEAD, PERTHSHIRE, FK19 8PU, SCOTLAND.

FAIRVIEW HOUSE

Main Street, Killin, Perthshire, FK21 8UT

Conveniently set in the heart of Killin, **FAIRVIEW HOUSE** is a well established family run guest house offering the warmest of welcomes.

Packed lunches are available, and after a day out on the hills, we have good drying facilities.

Set in its own attractive grounds, **FAIRVIEW** has a comfortable lounge with colour T.V., H & C in all rooms, with a choice of en suite, full central heating, and you can always be assured of good home cooking.



Contact Roger or Muriel Bedwell. We are always delighted to help.

Phone (0567) 820 667

**S.T.B. COMMENDED
TWO CROWN**

THE BYRE INN

Brig O' Turk, By Callander.

Phone: (0877) 376 292

The Byre is a unique and popular Bar Restaurant sitting just off the A821 midway between Callander & Aberfoyle, well known for its good food and comfortable Victorian surroundings. Being "**Taste of Scotland Recommended**" you will find that our daily lunch menu and A la Carte evening meals are highly regarded.

During the winter **The Byre** is a local gathering spot for lovers of both jazz and folk music, with jazz at **The Byre** on selected Friday nights and popular folk nights most Saturday's.

"EGON RONAY RECOMMENDED"

*To book a reservation,
give John Park a ring, who will be
happy to help.*



PORTNELLAN LODGES

by Crianlarich,

Perthshire, FK20 8QS.

Set high on the speckled hillside within the long shadow of Ben More and Stob Binnean,

Portnellan Luxury Chalet Lodges offer a quality of accommodation that is second to none and the *privacy and freedom* to go as you please. Enjoy the freedom to breathe the crystal air and explore the secluded corries of the high slopes where the only sound is that of the curlew and the dancing streams.

Open all year round **Portnellan Lodges** make the ideal holiday base for skiing, rambling or fishing trips, or just to relax in luxurious seclusion.

For more information or to book your break phone Elaine or Trevor Taylor on 0838 300284/ fax 0838 300332

ALL LODGES ARE SCOTTISH TOURIST BOARD
FIVE CROWN HIGHLY COMMENDED

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Tandoori Restaurant
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WITH THE CHOICE OF 25 MAIN COURSES AND 7 STARTERS
+ SWEETS & COFFEE - £4.95

FREE DELIVERY IS AVAILABLE ON ORDERS OVER
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PARTIES WELCOME-PLEASE
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0877 330928



Mansewood

Country House Hotel

Within the shadow of the Braes of Balquhidder, and only a few minutes from Lochearnhead village, **Mansewood** is a comfortable family-run hotel most superbly situated for wonderful rambling expeditions.

Phone Jeff Jeffery for more details.



**Lochearnhead,
Perthshire,
FK19 8NS**

Phone (05673 830) 213.

DUN WHINNY'S COFFEE HOUSE

9 Bridge Street, Callander, Perthshire, FK17 8AA.

Phone: (0877) 331257

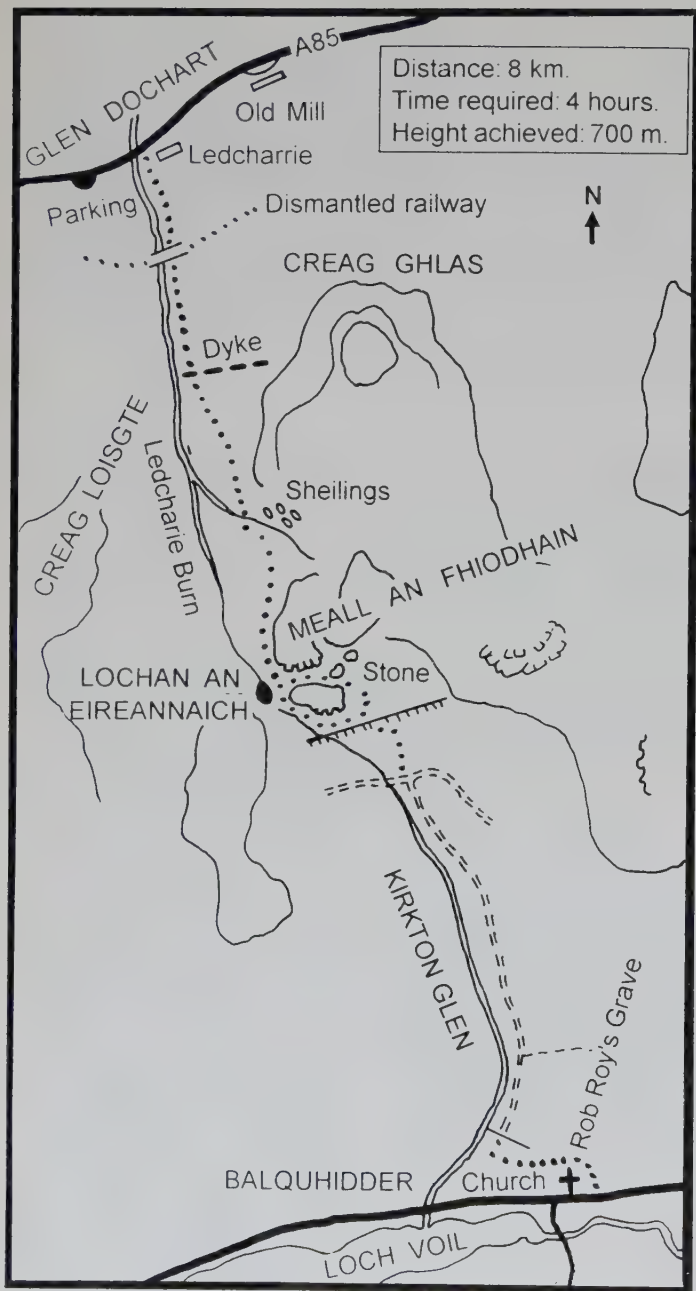
Dun Whinny's is a warm and friendly coffee house in the centre of Callander, where you can treat yourself to beautiful cream teas, or choose from the wide and tasteful selection of open sandwiches, platters and snacks.

Daily you will find a wide selection of freshly prepared home baking, and look for our blackboard menu to inform you of our 'specials'.

We also have a take away service.

Proprietors: Andrew & Fiona Leishman





BALQUHIDDER TO GLEN DOCHART.

Balquhiddar: Bespeckled township. (pos.) **Glen Dochart:** Glen of sorrow. **Ledcharrie:** Leud Carraigh, broad place. **Old Mill:** The mill, this may relate to the important burial mound opposite Old Mill. **Creag Loisgte:** Burning scorched crag. **Lochan an Eireannaich:** Loch of the Irishmen. **Meall an Fhiodhain:** Hill of testimony witness. **Meall an t-Seallaidh:** Windy hill. **Kirkton Glen:** (Scots) Glen of the church. **Creag Tuirc:** Crag of the boar. **Loch Voil:** Lively Loch.

Balquhiddar is an undeniably beautiful place with a long glen that cuts deep into the surrounding mountains, almost to the head of Loch Lomond. It is also an ancient settlement, with a turbulent, and at times violent history. But the area of Balquhiddar should not be seen in isolation, it was for centuries a vibrant and active glen where the people of the scattered communities were as at home on the slopes of Ben More, The Lomonds, or where ever the numerous mountain passes may have led them. They raised cattle and, as often not, were guilty of stealing cattle, but did not complain when their own cattle were lifted by marauding McDonalds from the vastness of Glen Coe, such was life.

Frequently they used their mountain passes to carry illicit whisky to the drinking dens of Glasgow, or lift cattle from the Colquhouns over in Luss on Loch Lomondside, but now the drovers, the revers and the smugglers are long gone, but what does still remain are the many mountain passes that they used. Such a pass, from Kirkton, up through the glen to Lochan an Eireannaich and over to Ledcharrie has always been an important route, and today, it can make for a really enjoyable days outing.

The walk begins at Balquhiddar Kirk where you can spend some time visiting the grave of one of the Glen's most colourful sons, Rob Roy McGregor, where he lies with his wife and one of their own sons.

Walk up the side of the Kirk and you will find a stile that



Rob Roy McGregor's grave at Balquhiddar Kirk.

leads you onto a good forestry track. It is a steady but gentle rise up the forest trail and you should ignore the other roads that fork off here and there, just stay with the central route.

On occasions you may find tree felling in operation, but rarely will this cause you any trouble, and after a relatively pleasant walk up through the forest you will get the first sight of Meall an Fhiodhain directly ahead of you. A bit further on you will reach a T junction on the road, and here you must now leave the forest trail. Straight ahead of you there is a peeling sign board, but you will also see a large pile of stones by your new footpath. Take a minute and put another stone on the pile, this will help mark the trail clearly for others who follow.

All of the trees to the left of the path have been felled and some untidy felling has left timber lying across the footpath, but this will pose no problems and you can easily make your way around it. When you reach the top of the small stretch of path you will now clear the forest, and ahead of you, will be a wire and post fence with a small stream flowing under it. Cross the stream and follow the fence to your left until you reach a stile where you may now cross. This now brings you onto the high clean moorland.

Follow the path upwards for a short way until you can clearly see the hills ahead of you. Over to your right you will see the high rocky face of Meall an Fhiodhain, and to your left will be a hilly knoll. You can at this stage break to your right towards the high cliffs, but I prefer to take the left route that takes you through a small pass straight to the lochan. Follow the moor upwards until you almost reach the base of the knoll and you will find a stream running to its left. Follow the stream into the small pass and after a short way you will emerge at the edge of Lochan an Eireannaich. You are now at the highest point of the pass with a wonderful view over the little lochan to

the impressive rocky face of Meall an Fhiodhain. To reach the high rocky face only requires a short walk over the moorland, and it really is impressive. Great slabs of grey rock litter the foot of the cliff and make you reflect on the name, Meall an Fhiodhain, the hill of witness, what did it witness, what ancient rights took place here? There are no answers, it's all lost in the mists of time; and the great grey slabs are saying nothing.

This is a place to be enjoyed, and unless you are passing on to Glen Dochart, you can explore this whole region. Interestingly, although I have been over this way many times, I recently saw my first trout being taken from the small loch. Often, I have heard stories of the loch being stocked with an unusual type of fish, and truthfully, I was sceptical, but now must admit to it being true.

The fisherman informed me that he thought the fish to be American brook trout and, not being a fisherman myself, I take his word for it. The fish I saw being reeled in were almost pure white with some red spots on the back and sides and the red spots each had a distinct dark roundel over them, unlike any other trout I have ever seen.

When you have finished exploring this interesting place and want to return to Balquhider, you should now head towards a massive stone that you will see at the base of the cliff. You can not mistake it as it really is enormous. From here you will now be able to see your way across the moor to where you left the forest and pick up one of the small trails leading back to the stile and your walk back to your starting point.



Carrying on to Glen Dochart you should follow the eastern side of the lochan where you will find a boundary fence and a convenient gate set into it that now leads into a small stone pass, and a hundred metres further on you will be able to see down the northern glen to Glen Dochart. At this stage it is better to keep to the higher ground instead of bolting straight down the slope into the centre of the glen as the ground tends to stay a bit drier on the upper slope. Following the contour of the hill you will reach a notable scattering of stones just a little way below the contour and you should now head down towards this point. If you have not been following this route exactly it is not in any way a problem as at all times, once you are in the glen, you are able to see all the way down into Glen Dochart and will easily find a route of your own to the lower ground.

Once you are at the scattering of boulders, if you climb up to the highest of them you will be able to pick out the remains of some sheilings ahead of you. They are marked by a substantial cairn. To reach them you must first cross a small burn that runs down from Meall an Fhiodhain and you can spend some time poking around in the old ruins. When you leave the sheilings follow the burn down hill a little until you reach a snatch of old trail. There is not one definite

definitive trail down through the glen but with your direction set you will continually find bits of trail that peter out, and you should use them when you can, but marker stobs have been set into the ground at intervals to help you with navigation over the moor. Although overgrown and mainly lost, you will at times encounter stretches of the original old

road, that must, at one time, have run the full length of the glen. From the snatch of trail by the burn you will be able to see a marker stob ahead of you, and you set your course for this. When you reach the marker, looking downhill you will again see another marker stob set on a small hillock, and a

fairly well defined track skirts it. Keep to the left of the hillock and you will come across a dry stane dyke with a gap in it which you must now pass through, then it's over a small wire fence which you should cross where it runs onto a small hillock. From this little area, the views are particularly



Meall an Fhiodhain over Lochan Eireannaich

relaxing and it's worth the time just to enjoy them. Below, the water tumbles down in a series of waterfalls over the great grey slabs of rock with birch trees clinging to the stony banks. On the other side of the water the hills slope gently up to the green topped Creag Loisgte, and mighty Ben More, over by Crianlarich pushes its shoulders high above the horizon. From this vantage point you need only follow the banks of the river where you will easily find small footpaths to make the going easy and following the river this way will

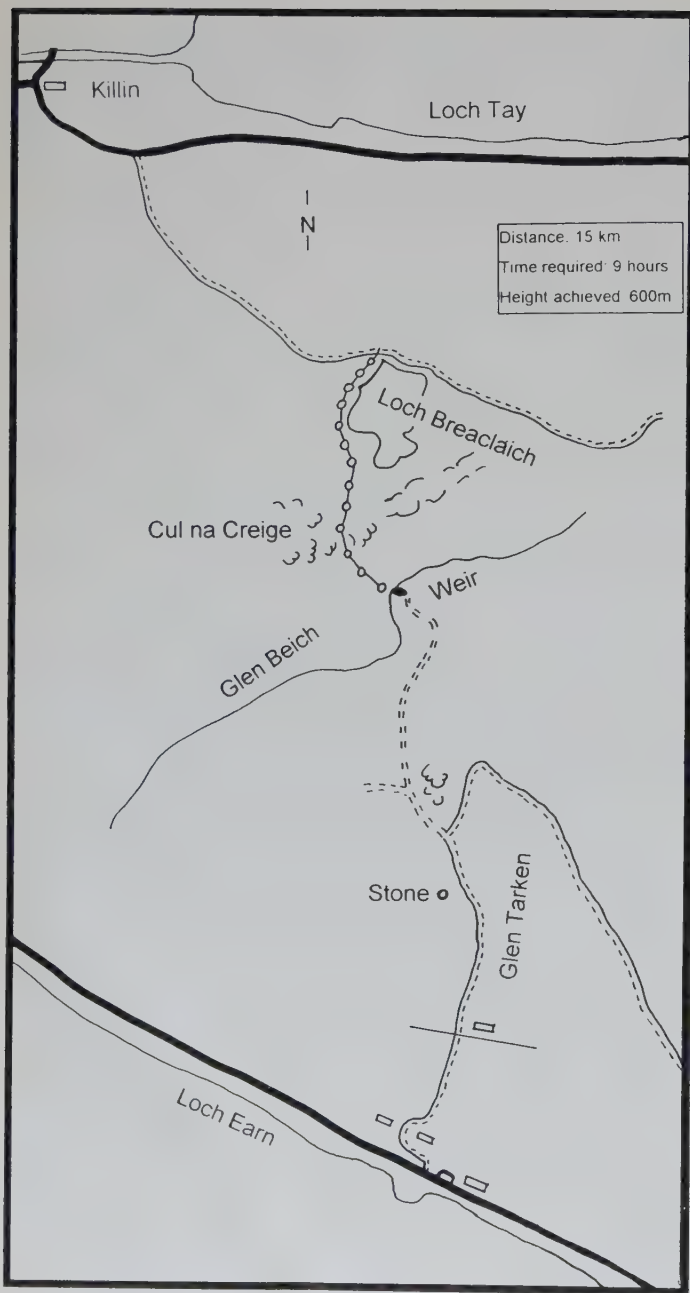
bring you to and old railway bridge. Go beneath the bridge, and the best way to proceed is to follow the fence by the river, only making detours to stay clear of the marshy ground. This in turn will bring you to a dyke with a break in it and, once through the dyke, you follow the coarse path that leads you down to a steel gate. This gate now leads you into the yard of Ledcharrie Farm, which you pass through, then onto the main road and your journey's end.





Neish Island - Loch Earn

Photo: Bob Money



ST. FILLANS TO KILLIN.

Glen Tarken: Glen of the wild boar: Glen Beich: Glen of the beech trees. Cul na Creige: Back of the crag. Loch Breacalich: The speckled loch.

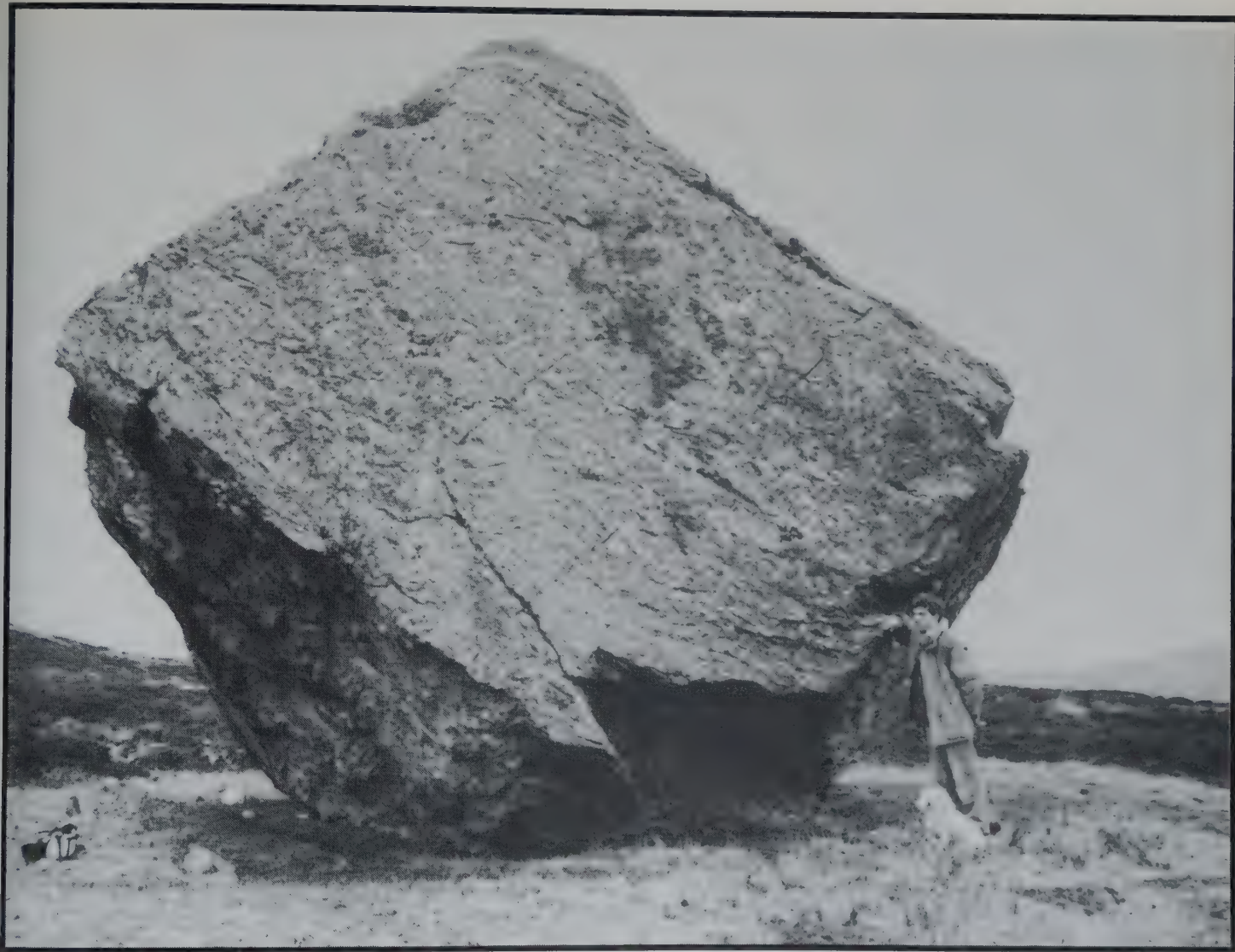
In the hills between Loch Earn and Loch Tay there exists a whole network of interesting passes that have for centuries carried packmen, cattle drovers and travellers into the remoter settlement that existed within these hills, and although in the main, these travellers were welcome for the news that they carried, not all travellers within these hills were bent upon honest commerce.

During a bitter cold night in early January of 1613 a small party of McNabs from Killin slipped quietly through these passes, carrying with them a small boat, the purpose of which was to ferry them stealthily over to the small crannog just off the shore line at St. Fillans and, the purpose of the visit nothing less than the violent slaughter of every member of the Clan Neish, lying, so they thought, secure within their small keep on the island.

The raiding party, led by Smooth John the eldest son of the McNab chief, showed no mercy to the sleeping Neish household, but slaughtered them where they lay, exterminating a whole clan that had continually lived on this island and around these shores of Loch Earn since the year 1250.

The route used by the McNabs is easily traced and makes for a very enjoyable day's ramble. Leaving St. Fillans on the road to Lochearnhead you will pass a house on your right called Woodhouse, it is just opposite the sailing club, and just beyond Woodhouse on your right you will find a parking lay-by. A few yards beyond the lay-by you will find a barred gate that leads onto a broad track and this is the beginning of your route.

When you pass through the gate, you follow the track upwards through a small oak wood. The trail veers to the left and as you near the top of the hill you will pass a deserted homestead and two small cottages. Beyond this the trail veers



The Great Stone of Glen Tarken.

to your right heading into Glen Tarken. From here you will get beautiful views far down the loch to St.Fillans. After a steady climb you will come to a gate and a small sheep

station which brings you into the glen. Glen Tarken can be a bleak and uninviting glen, but it improves the further on you go. As you proceed along the hardpack you will continually find little mounds of stones built up on the grassy bank by the side of the road. These are the remains of what was once

a populous settlement within the glen. Today it's difficult to imagine how any community could have managed to scratch out a living in this hostile environment but, they themselves must have had enough, as the residents of the glen moved out in 1817 to found a village called Port More by the side of the loch. Today Port More is called St. Fillans. The only memory of that original name being the hill above St. Fillans, and in this instance, the name means the gateway onto the moor.

The one unusual feature that Glen Tarken may boast is The Great Stone of Tarken and you will find it a little distance from the road on your left. Set back a little way on a grassy bank it really is a colossus of a thing with a circumference at its base of over seventy feet, but part way up the girth broadens to some one hundred and ten feet. In the past it has been calculated that this monolith contains about twenty five thousand cubic feet of material.

Not far beyond the great stone you will find a fork in the road and you take the branch to your left which will lead you over the small pass into Glen Beich. As you begin to rise into the pass you immediately begin to notice that the character of the glen begins to change, becoming more pleasant and interesting.

Nearing the top of the pass will bring you close to a rocky cliff face, and you may notice that the fallen rock has at one time been used for the building of this small stretch of road. Once past the rock face you now leave Glen Tarken behind and start your descent into Glen Beich.

As you get to the bottom of the road where it runs onto the moor, you will see that it travels down to a collection of sheep pens, but that another section of the road veers to the right in a northerly direction, heading towards the Beich Burn that runs down through the centre of the glen.

Take this northerly route towards the head of the glen and after a bit of leisurely walking the road ends beside a small weir. Some three kilometres ahead of you will be a tall radio mast at the top of Ceann Creagach, if you wanted to journey to Comrie through Glen Lednock, and it is a most enjoyable

walk, that is where you would find your route.

The weir sits at the base of a long ridge called Cul na Creig and if you look at the face of the ridge you will note two gullies slashing down the hill towards you. The right hand gully carries the infant Beich Burn down to the weir, but the left hand gully is prominent because of the bright green swathe running down its centre, and this is the pass that you can use to cross over from Glen Beich to Loch Tayside.

The pass is not very steep, so make your way up into it and to the left near the head of the pass, you will see a rocky knoll which you head towards. At this point the ground flattens a bit and you will see the final brow of the pass a short way ahead of you. As you breast the top of the pass you will now find yourself looking out over Loch Breaclauch and enjoyable views over the mountains surrounding Loch Tay.

Loch Breaclauch, which is now a reservoir, has a broad rock and sand beach around it, so start heading down the hill towards the left hand beach and when you reach it follow the beach until you reach a large stream where you should now head up the slope until reaching the dam parapet. You can now cross over the dam where you will find a good road that will carry you all the way down to the south Loch Tay road and, only a short way from Killin where you will enter the village beside the Clachaig Hotel overlooking the Falls of Dochart, and the end of your journey.



The famous Falls of Dochart.

Ben Sheann Hotel

Main Street, Strathyre, Perthshire, FK18 8NA.

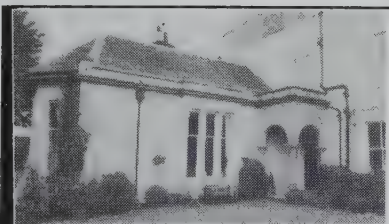
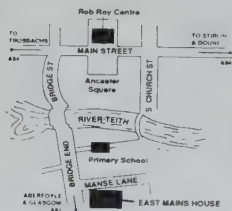
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The BEN SHEANN is a long established family run hotel nestling amidst the beauty of Strathyre. Each of the Hotel's ten bedrooms offers its own individual comforts. Family and en-suite rooms are available and all rooms have tea/coffee making facilities and TV. With two bars, residents lounge and an all day license, the BEN SHEANN is popular with both visitors and locals alike offering guests alternative means of relaxation.



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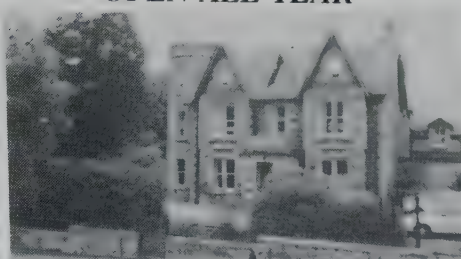




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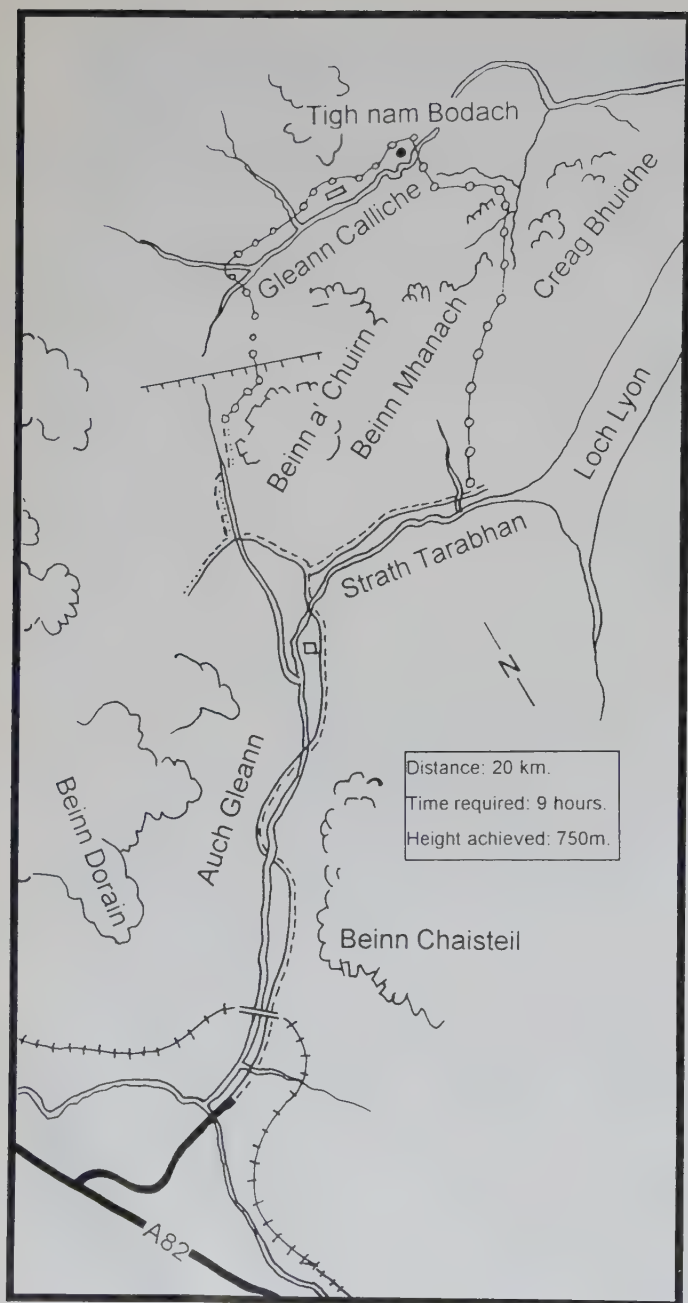
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GLEN COE TO TIGH-NAM-BODACH.

Tigh-nam-Bodach: House of the woman. **Glen Calliche:** Glen of the old woman. **Beinn a' Chreachain:** Steeple mountain. **Beinn Achaladar:** Mountain of the wild fief. **Creag Bhuidhe:** The yellow crag. **Strath Tarabhan:** Valley of the little bull. **Glen Auch:** Glen of the meadow.



Throughout Scotland in lonely and often isolated glens you will often find strange little reminders of a long forgotten age, but, none quite so strange as Tigh nam Bodach in Glen Calliche. The first one hears about this strange little family would be about the middle of the 16th century but, long before that this little glen bore her name. This little house and all its family have, in all probability, been quietly sitting here for upwards of three thousand years, dating back to the time of the circular forts in Glen Lyon, or possibly even to the bronze age.

Up until relatively modern times, the mid 18th century, the old woman, her family and house, were cared for by the people of Glen Lyon. Each year when they arrived at the Sheilings of Glen Calliche and Glen Meran they would immediately remove the family from their little house and place

fresh thatch on the roof. The old woman and her family would then sit benignly at the door of the house watching over the sheiling people until the onset of winter, when they would once again be placed snug in their little house until the following year. Even today, after so many years, the shepherd on this beat keeps a wary eye on his charge.

Your walk begins some 3 km north of Tyndrum in Glen Coe, here, a car park intersects with the West Highland Way and you can follow the route for 2.5 km down to the military bridge at the hamlet of Auch. Alternatively you can park unobtrusively near the turning for Auch which is 5.5 km north of Tyndrum, and walk down the private road to the military bridge. It should be stressed that this is a private road and that parking on this road should not be encouraged as it interferes with the day to day workings of the farm.

Do not cross the military bridge, but follow the hardpack road that leads into the glen up the side of Allt Kinglass, the stream of the grey head. As you wander up the side of the river you will meet with another river, Allt Coralan, which has its beginning up on the northern slope of Beinn Chaorach, if you go a few yards up the wooded edge of Allt Coralan you will find a pleasant little waterfall tumbling through the trees. You must now cross over this river but, as concrete slabs have been laid across it, you will find no problem going over the ford.

Once over the river, and keeping to the hardpack, it is a beautiful quiet walk into the glen with only the rush of Allt Kinglass for company. Soon you will pass under the railway viaduct where you will have Beinn a' Chaisteil rising dramatically on your right and Beinn Dorain to your left, it's almost like passing through a pair of mighty portals into the glen. For the time being you will make good speed on the hardpack, but shortly you will again reach a ford where you may cross Allt Kinglass, unfortunately, because both the river and the trail do a lot of meandering with one criss crossing the other, it is probably better to stay on this side of the river and just make your own way over the soft moorland. There are times where you must cross Allt Kinglass, but it gets

easier the further on you go. Walking in this fashion you will in time reach the deserted homestead of Ais-an t Sidhean, the windy place. The old homestead is a sad little place, now used for sheep gathering, but at one time generations of hardy families would have been raised here, and the green by the house with its collection of stunted trees shows how the one time residents have tried to improve their immediate outlook. With its magnificent mountain backdrop it is a remarkably beautiful place, but life would have been hard here and perhaps one should not get too nostalgic about a way of life that is now long past. Scattered around the hills by the homestead you can find any amount of remains of early settlements. On an old map that was compiled around 1800 for the Statistical Account of Scotland, a church is shown clearly around this position, but unfortunately no name was given to it so it could be any one of the numerous small foundations that you can see on the moor, but it points clearly to their having been a sizable population in the glen, at least up until the 45' and the subsequent clearances.

When you pass through the homestead you are again on a good hardpack road, and straight ahead you will see Bein a' Chuirn and Beinn Mhanach rising four square in front of you like two massive suet puddings, well, that's the impression that they give me, solid, wholesome but difficult to digest. When you walk along the road towards them you will find that the trail splits and you must now take the left fork. The trail starts rising and will bring you up to a small water culvert where you can get impressive views far down Glen Auch and of Beinn Dorain and Beinn an Dothaid which are now both directly ahead of you.

The trail now turns hard right and onto a very stony path that leads up into the pass between Beinn an Dothaid and Beinn a' Chuirn. It's a steady enough climb and takes you up the side of the river that starts at the head of Glen Calliche. After a way, the trail now crosses the river and ends abruptly part way through the pass. From the trail ending you should now follow the river upwards towards the brow of the pass. As you follow the river upwards, start sloping right so that you

are slowly moving up the bank and away from the river. The aim is to bring you around the skirt of Beinn a' Chuirn and into Glen Calliche without getting caught in the muddy reaches where the rivers start.

As you skirt the ben you will cross a fence and now be able to see your way into the glen with the high faces of Beinn Achalader off to your left. Now start crossing the moorland

heading down the slope towards the centre of the glen Allt Callich, which runs through the centre. As you approach this river, which you must cross, you will see what appears from here to be a stony road running down from Beinn Achalader towards the river, and as you get closer, you will find in fact that it is a stony banked river that joins with Allt Callich. Particularly when the snows are melting you will find that the many rivers that abound here can be a bit lively.



The old woman and her family outside Tigh nam Bodach.

and that crossing them is not always that easy, but just before the meeting of these two rivers you will find a good crossing place that will take you over both of them.

Looking down the glen you will be able to see a large stone sheep or cattle pen some distance ahead of you and, taking the other small rivers as you find them you should now head down the moorland towards the pen.

When you reach it, you will find that it is very well built indeed, and that close to it are a number of sheiling remains. You are now at the base of Beinn a' Chreachain and on the other side of the river you will have the rocky faces of Beinn Mhanach.

Continue wandering down the moorland and ahead you will notice that the river begins to loop slightly, and this means that you are now getting close to Tigh nam Bodach. Without much warning you suddenly come across the old lady and her family. The site has been beautifully chosen and sits on its own little green parkland only a short way from the river and within the shadow of Beinn a' Chreachain with a fine south facing view down the fertile valley to Glen Meran.

This strange little altar, if that is what it is, really is a little gem of a place, here, you have tangible and touchable history with a continuity that runs far back into the darkest recesses of man's existence within these glens. In any other country but this, it would be protected and revered, but here it remains, and rightly so, part of the normal and natural cycle of life. Thousands of springs have come and thousands of springs have turned to summer, but the old lady, secure with her family in her house, never ages.

If you must remove nam Bodach from her house, then do so with care, there is no custodian to say otherwise, but make sure that afterwards, you return her safely again to her retreat and know that you are a very privileged person.

When you are ready to leave this glen you have a choice, trek back up Glen Calliche and leave the same way as you came in, or make the long detour through Glen Meran and

along the shores of Loch Lyon to Strath Tarabhan. But for me, it's up and over by Creag Bhuidhe, the yellow crag.

Just below Tigh nam Bodach you will find that you can safely cross the river, and from here you start heading upwards onto the high moorland. You will find a small gully with a stream that you can follow upwards and after a bit of steady plodding you will see a spiny rock ridge above you which you head for. You will have the rocky faces of Beinn Mhanach off to your right. From the spiny ridge you will see a long gully sloping down from a pass between Creag Bhuidhe and Mhanach which you follow upwards, passing over another little stream. This high moorland is soft for walking on and if you have been following the general direction of the gully you will find that it leads into an area of peaty ground just before you clear the pass at the highest point. From here, find a comfortable contour that keeps you walking around the skirt of Beinn Mhanach.

As you walk around the skirt of the ben at about 700m you will see a long arm of Loch Lyon running south into Coire Chirdle and a small collection of farm buildings above the shore. Still keeping to your contour you will now begin to see the crags of Beinn an Dothaid far ahead of you and the west most tip of Loch Lyon meeting Strath Tarabhan. At this point you can start making a sloping descent, now descending obliquely over the moor. If you get it right you will end up just above a deep gully that runs down to the road at the start of Strath Tarabhan. If you don't, then it just means a steeper descent to the same road.

Once on the road, which has terminated at this point, you can now follow it back to the fork at the head of Glen Auch and make your long journey back through the glen to your starting point.



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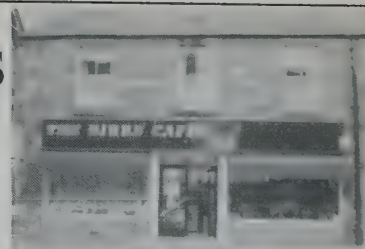
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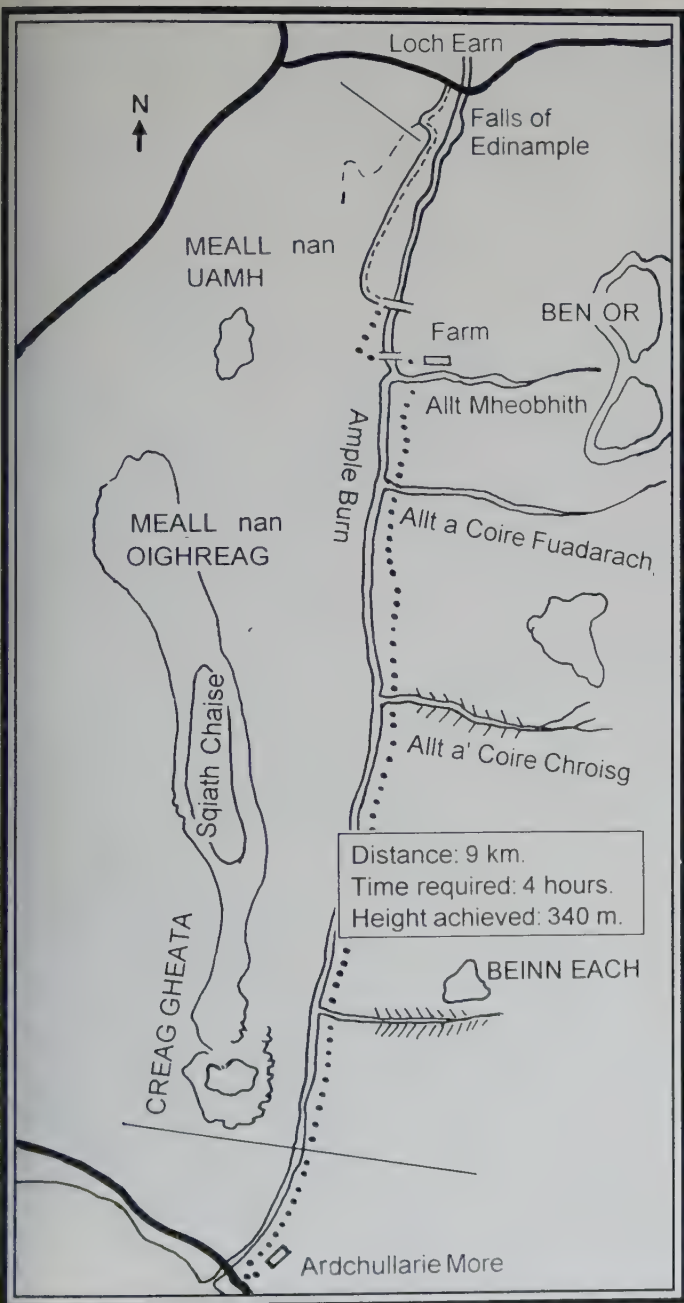
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STB 3 CROWNS





Creag Gheata at Ardchullarie More.



LOCH LUBNAIG TO LOCH EARN.

Ardchullarie More: Large wooded point. **Creag Gheata:** Crag of the gate. (entry to the hills) **Eas an Eoin:** Waterfall of the birds. **Beinn Each:** Ben of the horse. **Alit Coire Fuadarach:** Turbulent river of the corry. **Edinample:** The brow or face of the marshy ground, or pool. (received tradition translates Edinample as being of Pictish origin and alludes to a battle fought here between Edin, leader of the Picts, and the Romans. Edin ample, Edin's place of turning. The former is probably more accurate, although it is strongly believed that an important confrontation did take place here.)

This ramble which begins at Ardchullarie More on Loch Lubnaig, and ends over on Loch Earn, is particularly suitable for a family ramble, as there are no demanding climbs, and you will find a track of sorts over the full distance. The problem being that, as with many glen walks, transport back to your starting point is scarce but, if you check with the tourist information offices you can get details of the bus service that runs past Lochearnhead to Callander.

I would advise you to allow four hours for this walk, not because of the distance or the terrain, but simply because it is one of those walks where you will always find spots where you want to stop and enjoy this quiet glen, or slope off to explore interesting corners.

4.5 km south of Strathyre, a point of land juts out onto Loch Lubnaig facing Ardnandave Hill which you can see on the opposite side of the loch, and this is Ardchullarie More where the walk begins. You will find easy parking here and the entry is sign posted.

Walking up the hardpack road you turn left at the first building you meet and this brings you to a stile which you cross. Fairly quickly you start rising and the track brings you to a gate that in turn takes you onto a stretch of forestry trail. Although this is not a steep rise, quickly the views behind you begin to open up, making for some good scenes behind you to Loch Lubnaig and the hills opposite

As you make your way along the trail Creag Gheata on your left comes into view over the top of the trees. It means the crag of the gate, indicating that it was once the gateway onto the hills to your left, which themselves stretch unbroken to Loch Earn. The trail shortly leads you to a deer fence with a stile crossing it and, once over, you now have miles of uninterrupted walking through the long glen.

Once into the glen you begin to get a feeling for the hills surrounding you. Those to the west, on your left, are fairly soft and rounded with small craggy faces here and there, while to the west of the glen, the hills tend to be high, craggy and domineering.

After about a kilometre of steady walking you will come to a burn across your path, this burn comes from a deep gully on your right called Eas an Eoin, or the waterfall of the birds. This gully comes from the shoulder of the 813m high Beinn Each, or the ben of the horse. This is a fairly common Gaelic name for certain hills that are split by a deep cleavage and the horses backside would be a more apt translation. Not particularly romantic, but very descriptive.

You will notice on the opposite side of the burn the remnants of an old drystone dyke and once over the burn you will find the remains of an old homestead there, not to be confused with sheilings, which were temporary summer dwellings. Very little can be seen of the glen's early inhabitants but the glen would have supported a reasonably large population prior to the clearances and would probably have been a better option for early north bound travellers than the route through Strathyre, which means the broad valley of the aspens.

Wandering on, the quality of the track varies a bit, depending on how the weather has been, you may have to make a few small detours over some of the wet patches. On occasions the trail gets a lot of water run off from the hills as numerous small burns make their way down to the river at the centre of the glen. Soon you will be passing the summit of Beinn Each and looking over the glen floor you can see the long ridge running from Meall nan Oighreag someway ahead of you to

Creag Gheata at the start of the walk. More remnants of the dyke run parallel to the trail, built there centuries ago to keep the animals from getting in among the crops. Slowly this part of the moor is reclaiming its own and wiping out the hand of man that has strove to change it.

After about another kilometre the last of the dyke slopes up the hill to the small rocky peak of Sgiath Chaise which is almost parallel with Strathyre over the hill to the west, and for the next two kilometres the glen shows its bleakest face but, as you forge on along the track, ahead of you the hills overlooking Loch Earn begin to show their faces and it's not long before the whole glen begins to take on a much more fertile appearance with indigenous trees now starting to show along the rivers edge and the young tree plantation gives a richness of greenery without obscuring the crags and hilltops. Behind you the long ridge of Sgiath Chaise recedes into the distance and the long glen takes on a whole new appearance.

To your right you can see the bowl shaped ridge of Coinn Chroisg and dipping down over a small rise the picturesque stream of Allt Coire Chroisg crosses your path, on the opposite side of the burn there is a well built collection of animal pens, their drystone walls still standing to a height of about four feet. With other remnants of dyke running by the river it takes but little imagination to realise that this would have at one time been a substantial homestead tucked away up here in the fold of the hills.

It's a pleasant place in which to stop for a while, the little hollow is protected from the winds and with the stream bubbling past you, it makes an idyllic corner, not to mention the views around you. Looking up the burn, Coire Chroisg butts onto Creag Dhubh, the black crag, and beyond that you can see the deep tree lined slash where Allt a' Coire Fuadarach divides Creag Dhubh from the first of Ben Or's twin peaks. If you were to wander up by the tumbling waters of Allt a' Coire Fuadarach you would find a large collection of ruined sheilings on the south side of the river. The word fuadarach means fast or hasty, probably describing the fast flowing water that tumbles out of the gorge.

On the opposite side of the glen the soft shape of Meall nan
Aghreag climbs above the line of newly planted trees and
that a lovely name it has, the hill of wild cloudberryes.

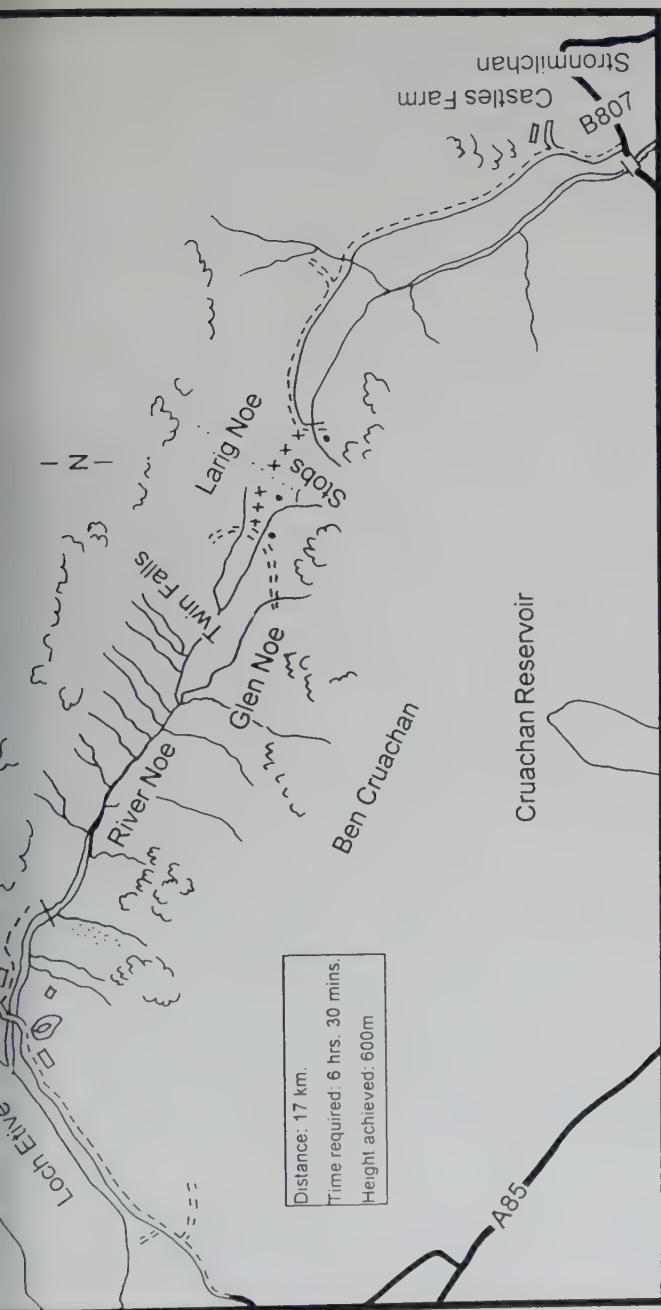
Beyond the pens the track is good and the dense canopy of
trees around the river gets thicker and you realise that you
are now again returning to civilisation when you can see the
farm buildings below you. Far in the distance beyond Loch
Earn and still beyond Loch Tay the high peaks of Ben
Lawers can often be seen.

Walking close to, but above the river, you will soon reach a
steel gate that leads onto a coarse meadow, when you cross
to the meadow follow the fence around and you will reach
Drystane dyke with a gap in it. Here you will see a sign
post with an arrow pointing to the right but that does not
relate to this walk so carry on through the gap and follow the
track and in the centre of the meadow you will reach a
wooden commemorative bench where you can rest your legs
and enjoy the views far down the remainder of the glen.

Passing on down the track you will come to the waters of
Allt a' Corrie Fuararach and although it is reasonably wide
there are sufficient boulders to make crossing easy enough.
The trail now follows close to the river and soon you will
again reach another small burn, cross the burn and walk
straight ahead towards the farm building. On reaching the
fence turn hard left and this will bring you to a small wooden
foot bridge which you cross. The walker is now in a corridor
between a large deer fence to the left and the river to the
right. Follow the footpath which wanders up the slope
leading away from the burn and this will after a short and
easy walk bring you to a good hardpack road. You turn left
on the road and this leads you for one and a half kilometres
to the Falls of Edinample and the end of your journey by the
side of Loch Earn.



Kilchurn Castle on she shore of Loch Awe.



GLEN NOE.

Allt Mhoille: The slow or tardy stream. **Allt Larig Lanachain:** Stream of the pass of abundance. **Beinn Eunaich:** Mountain of the hunting. **Beinn a' Chochuill:** Mountain of the mantle. **Larig Noe:** The pass into Glen Noe. **Stob Diamh:** Stake of the stag. **Glen Noe:** The new or fresh glen.

My lasting impression of Glen Noe is always of fearsome elemental forces, winds the howl around the mighty Ben Cruachan and beat down into the glen to attack the traveller as he fights his way over the Larig Noe, and of water, great torrents of it that fall in monumental columns from the towering hills during the early spring thaw. Water is everywhere, massive white spouts of it that soak the long stretches of moorland and gorge the gullies with angry white froth, and water that sweeps the long glen in great curtains of rain, blotting out the high rocky peaks. It is of course not always like this, for many, the memory is of long summer days by the pools of the River Noe with the high blue hills catching the last of the warm sun as it sets to the west over Loch Etive. Whatever impression this lonely little glen behind Ben Cruachan leaves on you, it will not be of disappointment.

Glen Noe was for generation the home of the MacIntyres, a family whom it is believed came from the Western Isles, led here by a white cow. When the white cow lay down, that is where the MacIntyres settled and built their home, which they called *Laraich na bo bane*, the home of the white cow. The land that they held was a feudal tenancy, firstly to the Stewarts, and then in the early fourteenth century, to the Campbells. For a time, the rental, paid each June, was a white calf and a snowball from the slopes of Ben Cruachan.

Just beyond the village of Lochawe on the A85, you will find a little loop road sign posted for Stronmilchan, less than half a kilometre up this road you will cross a small stone bridge that spans Allt Mhoille, a river that has its creation far up on the edge of Corrie Lochan, the corrie of the loch. Just beyond the bridge you will find a gate marked Castles Estate and this is the beginning of your route.

It is a good hardpack road and as you make your way along it you will see three conical peaks. The peak to the right that interests us is Stob Maol and you will be able to see the long scar of the trail making its way up its flank. The trail veers left at the junction of the road to Castles Farm and you now start the long plod up the hardpack, over the shoulder of Stob Maol.

On this road you gain height quickly and after a bit of exercise you can look to your left far out over the silver ribbon of Allt Mhoille to the remote corries of Stob Diamh and Corrie Lochan. A bit further up, the road becomes less of an and upwards plod and below the gaze of Beinn Eunaich you pass over the tumbling waters of Allt Larig Lanachain as they make their tumbling passage of 2,500 ft. to swell the waters of the valley. It would be easy to linger here and enjoy the beautiful views all around, but with the long passage of Glen Noe still ahead, it's worthwhile making good time on this road and pressing on.

In time you will reach a concrete shelter by the road where it dips towards a small weir. just beyond the shelter, on your right, you will see the first of a row of tall marker stobs that will lead you over the first stretch of the moor and up to Larig Noe. During the season of perpetual mists and low scudding cloud these markers are an absolute god send as they lead you gently onto the moor and up over the highest part of the journey before leaving you safely in Glen Noe.

Break off from the road and make your way up to the nearest of the markers where you will easily see the next, and again the next as they lead you up to the high ridge. The moor tends to be a bit damp over this stretch, but with the markers in easy sight you can pick your own way upwards until you breast the ridge which is Larig Noe. Beyond the ridge, which catches every breath of wind, or raging gale, you will now be able to see far down the glen and a totally different landscape from that which you have just left.

Over the ridge you will immediately find that the turf is now easier for walking on and that you now begin a comfortable descent. Again for a short distance you will have the marker

stobs showing you the way, but after passing a couple, both left and right, and this will bring you to the lip of a spectacular corrie with two mighty waterfalls crashing down from the north face of Corrie Lochan into its dark cleavage. From there you can now follow the markers as they meander downhill over a small disused section of roadway and a little weir at the end of the corrie. I would imagine that the road, which goes nowhere, was built during the construction of the massive Cruachan reservoir development, and that the marker stobs which are so helpful, were also placed here to help construction workers find their way over the moor to the weir.

Once on the short stretch of road, turn away from the weir and follow the road for about fifty yards, now looking down the glen you will see that two rivers make their way down the valley, the one to the right noticable only by the scattered rocks along its course. Leave the road and take a course through the middle of the rivers, you will find that as you leave the road and start your descent, a long narrow moraine runs down the centre of the two watercourses, and that it keeps you above the damp moorland. I have no doubt that this is a natural moraine, but strangely enough it does have a man made feel about its contours and in other parts of the country I have come across similar raised pathways in the vicinity of sheilings but, natural or man made, it makes walking that much more enjoyable.

Following the high ground downwards, you will begin to notice that the rivers start to get closer on either side of you until eventually they converge, just as they begin to converge together, cross the river to your right and only a short way you will find that both rivers fall in separate and very beautiful waterfalls into a communal pool. It is well worth the effort to climb down the steep bank to the stony basin that you may enjoy this little gem of nature that is so unexpected in this wild place.

If you look at a map of Glen Noe you will instantly notice that the north side of the river has innumerable small burn feeding it, but given that problem, it is still easier to make

our way down the glen on the right, or north bank, than it is to descend on the left bank with its much rougher terrain. Traditionally, travellers passing through the glen used the north bank, and indeed as you progress further down the glen you will pick up a very old trail that would have serviced the sheilings that you may still come across but, with new fencing and farm improvements at Glennoe Farmhouse, a clean exit to the road from the bank is no longer possible, so you will eventually have to cross the river again at a later point.

Wandering down through the glen is enjoyable, and as most of the streams running off of the northern hills are only narrow you will have no difficulty in crossing them. All along the route you will find interesting little corners where you can find the debris of sheiling remains set up on small knolls or unusual view points where you can watch the river tumbling over the great rock slabs along its course.

In time the banks of the river become lined with grey stunted trees, and where they begin, you will find a reasonable path well above the water line. Although I believe that these small houses remains to be found near the path are sheilings, that is, summer houses, there is every chance that these are the remains of old homesteads, as the glen once supported a sizeable community, now of course long gone.

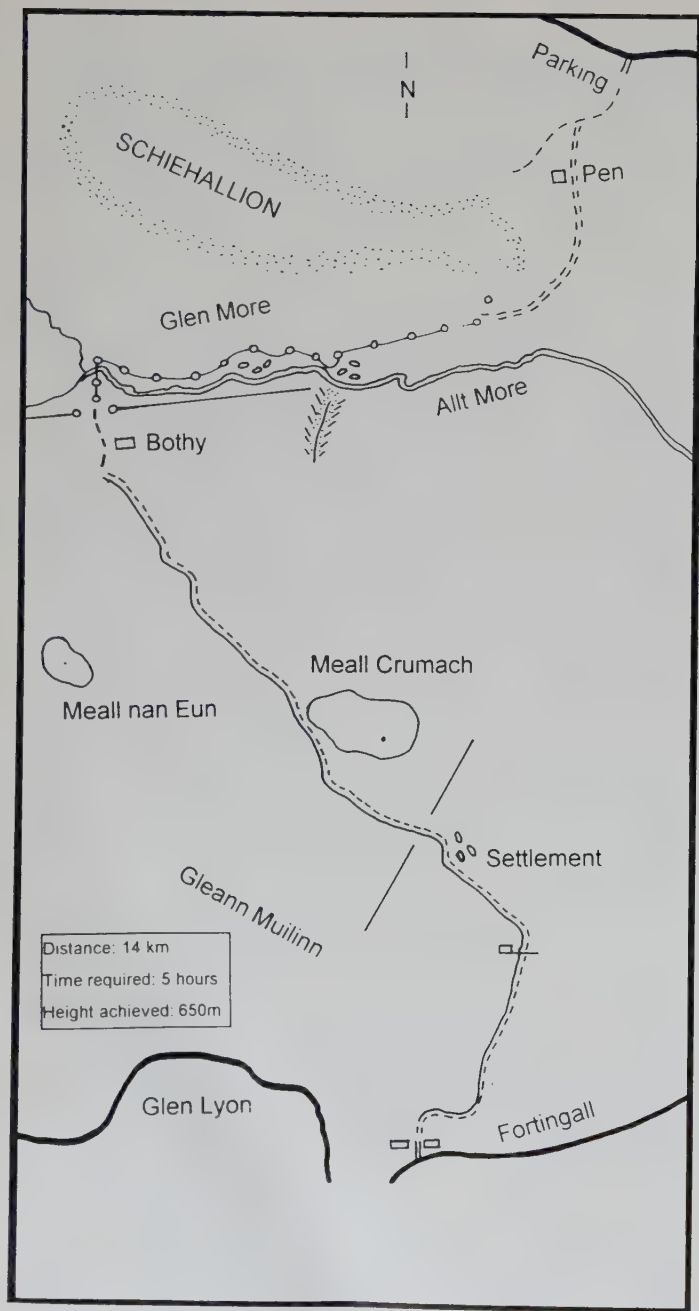
Depending on the state of the river, you must decide for yourself when it is time to cross over, although, with care it is possible to cross further down at the final waterfall, where the best views of the falls are obtained. Whether you pick up the trail or not makes no difference as you merely follow the river downwards until you reach the unmistakable rushing sound of this very picturesque waterfall with its superb mountain backdrop. Just beyond the falls you can make your way down the steep slope of the river bank and get equally impressive views of the great waterspout that emerges below the waterfall.

As I have said earlier, it is possible to cross the river by the falls, but much safer to go back upstream a little way and cross at one of the shallow areas where the water spills over

a section of rocky slabs. When you approach the falls from the south bank you will see ahead of you a great rock slide that emerges from Corrie a' Bhrait. As you get nearer to the rock slide you will find that the smaller stones have been used to build a drystone dyke, and that the dyke runs down towards the river, if you follow it down you will again be at the falls, only this time on the opposite bank.

Leaving the falls you will see ahead of you a skilfully constructed dyke with a break in it which you pass through. Beyond that you will find a gate through a modern fence which brings you onto some damp grassland. Again you will find another well made dyke ahead of you with a break in it, and just beyond it another gate to cross. Once clear of this clutter of fences and dykes you will see a prominent rocky knoll ahead of you and you should set your course for this. Heading for the knoll you will pass a massive, and very old stone built animal pen with some six apartments to it, and beyond that, you will see a wooden gate a little way above you, which you head for. Once through the wooden gate you should now follow the telegraph poles and this, in turn, will bring you onto a grassy road beside a modern bungalow.

The remaining five kilometres or so to the main road needs little explanation as you will be on a good forestry hardpack that first of all runs closely alongside Loch Etive, then once through a gate enters into the forest where it emerges at the public road leading to Loch Awe fisheries, and going to the left deposits you beside the main road.



SCHIEHALLION TO FORTINGALL.

Creag an Earra: Crag of the boundry. **Meall nan E**
Hill of the birds. **Meall Crumach:** Hook shaped
Gleann Muilinn: Glen of the mill. **Carn Mairg:** Cairn
the rented land. (Scots Merk.)

This is an enjoyable and relaxing route that takes you on the skirt of Schiehallion, through beautiful Glen More then on to Fortingall by way of the old moor road. Unfortunately, because of scant public transport, it can require some organisation if you require to get back to your starting point.

When you leave the Schiehallion car park, take the normal route for the peak, but after only a short way you will find a fairly strong trail of double trammels that goes to the west away from the peak path. To confirm that you are indeed on the correct trail, after about 500m you will reach a very substantial collection of stone pens. Carry on past the pens and you will be able to see the trail stretching out ahead of you through the heather. It's a rough stony trail, but reasonably good for walking on.

After about a kilometre the trail deteriorates and becomes a bit confused at a small fork, keep to the right and you will be able to follow what is now a very sketchy twin track up on a gentle incline. This now leads to a very prominent drainage ditch which is in fact one of the twin tracks that has started to carry run-off. Follow that upwards towards a small crag on top of a little crag and where the trail passes the crag you will be able to look out over the moor to the hills on the opposite side of Allt Mor.

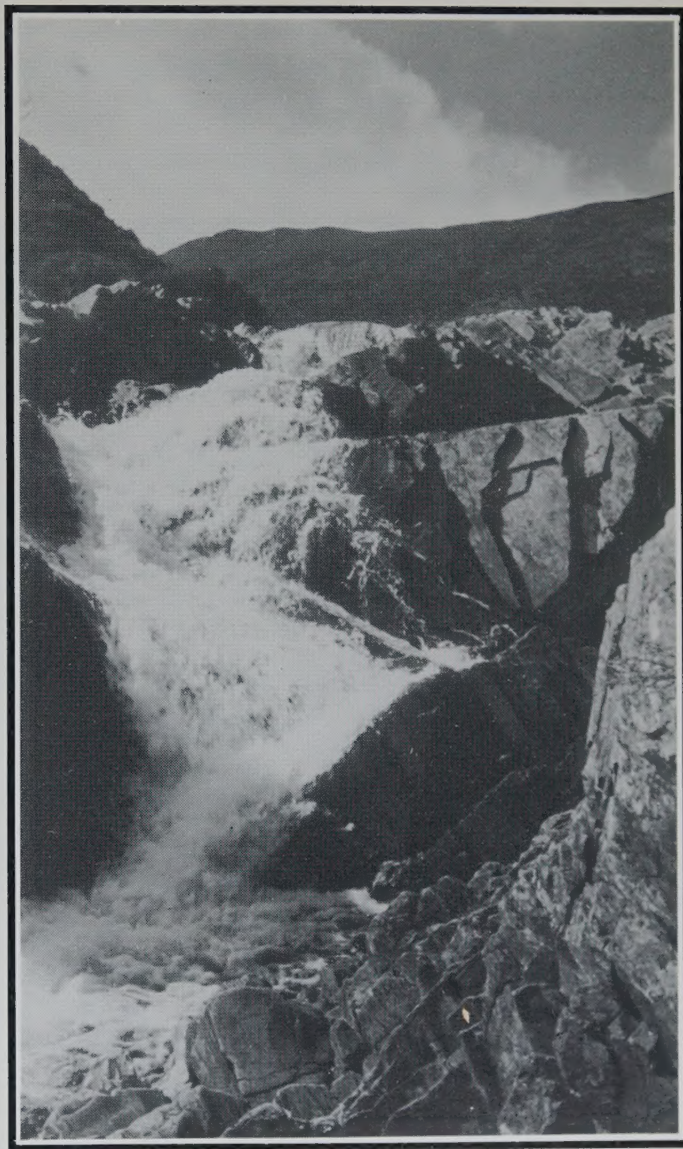
Etched deeply into the hillside is a large prominent scour scar to have been caused by Cailleach Bheur, or the winter hag, as she flew over with a tempest and this is the next landmark that you should be heading for. The trail ends just below this small crag, so can be of no more assistance to you. Leave the trail and pick your way over the heather covered moorland heading down the slope towards the landmark, and as you proceed you will find snatches of trail to assist you.

As you near the river you will find a strong footpath at the edge of the moorland running parallel with the water. Follow this to your right and this will lead you to a point opposite your landmark. Leave the trail and cross over the small stretch of damp moorland to where you will find a small collection of house remains overlooking the most beautiful waterfall. The clear sparkling water drops over a series of pink rocks into deep pools, and with the backdrop of the long grey ridge of Schiehallion it is a memorable picture.

To continue, return to your trail and follow it for a short distance, and where it crosses a burn you will find a great sweep of flat moorland ahead of you. A broken footpath runs up beside Allt Mor, but even where you lose it, it poses no problem as the flat moorland offers no obstacles. After a short walk of about 500m with the river as your companion you will again reach a small collection of house remains, each set up on its own little mound to give protection from the damp moor, and just beyond the small settlement another series of beautiful little waterfalls leap down through a narrow rocky gorge.

From here you can choose your own way over the moor, but it is just as easy to keep following the course of the river and, shortly, you will be able to see Glen More Bothy on the hill beyond the river. The bothy sits high up overlooking the green pasture, which is protected by a long boundary fence.

At the head of Glen More two rivers meet, Allt Mor which you are now following, and Allt Creag a' Mhadaidh. At the confluence of these rivers a large gravel delta has been formed, and as you must cross the river to reach the meadow beneath Glen More Bothy, this is the ideal place to do it. You will see a wide gate in the surrounding fence and when you cross the river and through this gate you will now find a thin trail leading over the meadow and up to the bothy. It's a steady climb upwards and you will find the trail going to the right of the bothy where the trail now becomes a bit vague, but you are now within a few metres of the road. Look for a covering of large timbers laid on the ground, and you will find that they will lead you to the start of the moor road.



Waterfall of Allt Mor.

For such a remote place, this old road is very well built, you can see clearly how the stones have been laid flat, and where small burns cross the road, a lot of attention has gone into making little viaducts to channel the water without it flooding the road. The earliest reference that I can find regarding this road was written around 1750 and it refers to the road following "The peat road that runs from Kirkton of Fortingall across the west shoulder of Schiehallion." This small reference would infer that the metalled road that we now see follows the line of a much older peat road, or natural pass, and that the metal surface must have been laid sometime prior to 1750. If that is correct, it would appear that this road has weathered better than the military roads that were built by Wade's engineers around 1730. The fact that this road was used regularly by farmers and travellers until the end of the nineteenth century may have contributed to its upkeep and maintenance.

You will be able to make good time on this road as the going is pretty easy, but eventually you will have a long pull upwards to the shoulder of Meall Crumach which is the highest point of your walk. It's a lonely old road, but all the more enjoyable for that, and once over the shoulder of Meall Crumach, it's now gently downhill all the way.



On the way down you will see a massive drystone dyke running down from Meall Crumach towards Gleann Muilinn, an amount of effort that went into building that must have been enormous and at first glance it appears to serve no great purpose, but just beyond the dyke you can find by the side

the road the remains of a large settlement. We know that at one time these glens, including Glen Muilinn, were very heavily populated. Around 1750 the Parish of Fortingall itself had almost five thousand inhabitants, with twenty six independent villages or settlements around the slopes. The massive dyke obviously dates back to around that period as part of a series of field closures. It's well documented that as early as 1726 good crops were being grown on the

southern slopes at heights of up to 1,200 ft. Now as we can see it's all given over to sheep and the inhabitants have all been cleared out. I think they call it "progress." The remaining way down the road is superbly pleasant with enjoyable views over the mouth of Glen Lyon to the silvery Loch Tay, here and there along the road you will see numerous settlement remains and it's easy to imagine why the crofters would have chosen this green spot for settlement. Soon you will be able to make out the roofs of the village below you, then all too soon you will find yourself at the end of the route beside Balnald, where you enter onto the main road with a short walk to Fortingall Hotel.



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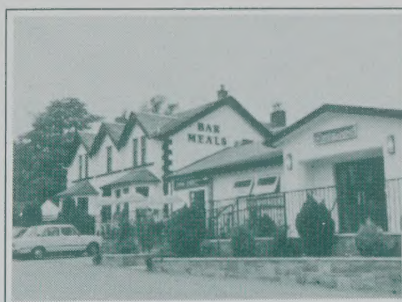
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